

SYDNEY S CHELLEN

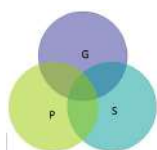
THE OTHER HIM

A thrilling story of mistaken identity, revenge and murder



OPEN
BOOKS
UK





A Publication distributed by GPSbooksUK

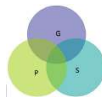
The Other Him

The Other Him

Psychological Thriller

by

Sydney S Chellen



Distributed by
GPSbooksUK

Copyright © March 2020 Sydney S Chellen. All rights reserved. v2.17cPCMO
First hardback Limited Edition printed 2020 in the United Kingdom.
Revised Jan 2023 v3.0



A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library and in the National Library of Mauritius.
ISBN 978-1-78972-053-2

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the Author.

Published by GPSbooksUK. For a copy of this book and others written by the same author, please go to:
www.sydneychellenbooks.com or www.amazon.co.uk and in search box type: **Chellen books**

Designed and typeset by Sydney S Chellen MA, BA(Ed), PGCE (FE), RNT, RCNT, SRN, RMN

Proofreaders/Editors
Patricia Diana Chellen, Dip.(HE) B.Ed (Hons.), NPQH
Maurice Valentino Chellen. LLB, LLM
Georgina Pauline Chellen

All the characters in this book have no existence outside the imagination of the author and have no relation whatsoever to anyone bearing the same name or names. They are however distantly inspired by some individuals known to the author. Most of the incidences are pure invention. Although every precaution has been taken in the preparation of this book, the publisher and Author assume no responsibility for errors or omissions. Neither is any liability assumed for damages resulting from the use of the information contained herein.

Characters 47,758 words

Adelina Spencer) Bono Spencer. (Alias Mr. and Mrs. Smith)

Bo Greene (-)

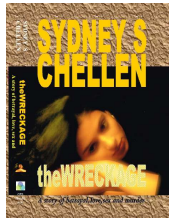
CJ Fairfield & Karina Fairfield (Detectives)

Bernice (wife of the cave man)
Chico (Taxi driver)
Cordelia (acquaintance of Bo Spencer)
Elfed Lewis (cave man)
Fatima (Iranian cleaner)
Fleur Dubois (Passenger in plane)
Graham Cox (Melanie's husband)
Henri Dumas (bellhop)
Jack Jones (man on motorbike)
Johnny (the carpenter)
Joe (Arms dealer)
Joanna Bottom (police receptionist)
Jack (an old enemy of Bo)
Jonathan Crown (-)
Killroy (police informant)
Lord Frank Longfellow (-)
Lady Elizabeth Longfellow (adulterous wife of Lord Frank Longfellow)
Lorna (Adelina's best friend)
Melanie Cox (Bono's ex girl friend)
Mario (Twoface) Maccini (staff nurse)
Mikhail and Tatiana Tsiolkovsky (Adelina's parents)
Nasty, Joe and Wolf (Jonathan's henchmen)
Reddy Donovan (Bono's business partner)
Rosetta Lee Jones (police librarian)
Sergeant Dixon and Constable Johnson (Police Officers)
Steven Lockwood (London mayor)
Thomas Long (private investigator)
Vinna Young (-)
Yuri Kerzhakov

This book is dedicated to:
my late dad: you were gone when I was only four years old,
but the little I knew of you is inscribed in my memory forever;
and to my late mum: you single-handedly raised me to believe in myself and I do.
I love you both and miss you lots.
I hope you would have been proud of me.

Sydney S Chellen, 2020.

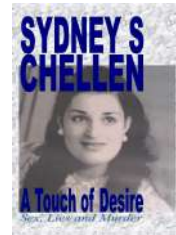
15 NOVELS by SYDNEY S CHELLEN, you must read before you die!



THE WRECKAGE



THE FOLLY OF LAURA



A TOUCH OF DESIRE



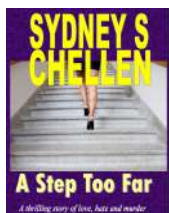
REVENGE OF THE BEAST



DEATH AT THE GELDENS HOTEL



ALONG CAME KEVIN



A STEP TOO FAR



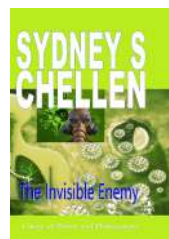
THE CHEATER CHEATED



BRIDE IN WAITING



THE OTHER HIM



THE INVISIBLE ENEMY



THE DARING MISSION



THE MAN WHO LOST HIS SOUL



DYANE



The Autobiography

CHAPTER 1 *Bono Spencer returns home and encounters Bo*

Day One

Tuesday, 19, November, 06:25 A.M.

 Imagine for a moment you came to your house and discovered a stranger was occupying your home and worse still, your wife seemed adamant the guy, she had half an hour ago, fetched from the airport was her husband. *Crazy isn't it? What would you do?* This was exactly the situation **Bono Spencer**, an English man living in London, found himself in, after having been to Paris on business for one week. It all happened a few years ago on a November morning.

Two hours prior, his plane had landed safely at London Heathrow Airport and soon after, he was striding through the long corridors of the airport. Once he had cleared customs, he went downstairs towards the carousel to pick up his luggage, heart pounding with excitement. He could hardly wait to see his adorable brunette wife and hold her in his arms again. It took him an unusually long time to find his suitcase and when he eventually did, it was broken and he had to spend time filling in a form for compensation, causing him an unexpected delay in reaching the arrival lounge.

Bono, as an art dealer frequently travelled abroad— at least two or three times a year— regularly visiting various auctions mostly in Europe, but particularly in Italy and France.

In his own city of London, standing proud at *121, Oxford high street*, was a tall building. It had two huge rooms, one on top of the other and it stood next to a Bank. Bono, with his junior partner **Reddy Donovan**, rented it. They used the ground floor as an office whilst the room above housed rare oil paintings Bono had acquired during his previous tours around Europe. Hidden in a cupboard, in oils on canvas was also the painting of Anna McNeill Whistler, best known under its colloquial name - Whistler's Mother, created by the American-born painter James McNeill Whistler in 1871, which, a few years back, went missing from the Musée d'Orsay in Paris. To the right collector, the painting would fetch thousands of pounds.

Standing in the arrival lounge, Bono noticed a crowd of people waiting presumably for their loved ones and he had expected his wife to be one of them. After glancing at his watch, he saw it was five minutes past eight in the morning. He looked up and a short-fat taxi man caught his attention.

'Taxi, sir?' the man asked, ready to grab Bono's luggage from him. The man was so short it made Bono look taller than he actually was.

Bono smiled and said, 'No thank you... my wife is picking me up.' At least that was his belief.

After scanning the area a few times in vain, he pulled out his mobile to initiate a call but alas, he found the battery was as dead as a dodo.

'Damn it!' he muttered with displeasure.

Having spotted an empty phone booth a few feet away, he hurried to it but a

young blonde woman got there first. She was a lovely woman, with a face that a man might die for. They smiled politely at each other. She could not help admiring Bono's blue eyes and dark hair, which had always been quite eye-catching and made him looked younger than his forty-four years. Most people found him handsome. Bono felt he had no option but to signal gallantly to the woman that she should go first. She accepted his offer.

'Thank you... I won't be long,' the young woman said appreciatively as she entered the booth and closed the door behind her. Her movements were economical and precise with no trace of self-consciousness.

Bono could not help noticing that the woman's voice sounded familiar, *but then he knew lots of women and he could be confusing her with one of them*, he thought.

In the booth, the blonde woman delivered a message to the person on the other end of the phone, 'The rabbit is here,' she said and revealed her observation.

'Good. You know what to do,' the listener said.

'I know,' the blonde woman said and the line went dead.

After replacing the receiver softly on its cradle, the woman discretely sprayed the top of the handset with a drug, which she had acquired from her friendly chemist, stepped out of the booth and gestured to Bono to enter. The latter got in but as he was about to lift the receiver he had an uncontrollable urge to sneeze and dirtied the handset. He promptly pulled out his handkerchief and wiped clean the receiver unaware that he had effectively removed the drug, which if absorbed into his body, would have caused temporary paralysis and forced him to tell the truth when interrogated. He dialled his house number and waited impatiently.

Adelina—the woman of the house, on hearing the house phone ringing stopped her conversation and picked up the phone.

'Hello,' she said.

'I thought you were coming to pick me up,' Bono said, rather loudly. 'What happened, are you not well?'

Adelina frowned. 'I beg your pardon. Who are you?'

'Very funny!' Bono responded and added, 'Don't tell me you don't recognise my voice... I'm Bono, the man you married a year ago, remember!' he said sarcastically, quite certain that he was talking to his wife.

'Look mister,' Adelina responded hastily. 'You've got the wrong number,' and replaced the receiver on its cradle. Wearing a grin, she moved back to her seat and picked up her conversation where she had left off.

'Who was that?' asked her companion.

'A *nuisance call* by the sound of it,' Adelina replied. 'I should have listened to you when you said install *True-call*.'

Bono, on the other hand, could not believe his wife had just cut him off. *It was quite unusual for her to be that rude*, he thought. He immediately redialled, this time making doubly sure that he punched in the correct numbers.

Russian born Adelina was a sexy woman with very black hair and wore it cut

square and low on the nape of the neck, framing her face to below the clear and beautiful line of her jaw. Her eyes were wide apart and deep brown. She nearly always wore medium-length dresses with a square-cut bodice, lasciviously tight across her fine breasts as if it was her trademark. She was the kind of woman who enjoyed seeing hot-blooded males getting excited by her beauty and intrigued by her composure.

However, lately she had been feeling pretty disgusted with life. She had been in England for twelve months, and was fed up with it. If anyone had told her a year ago that she would have been feeling like this, she would have laughed; but there it was. The British weather made her liverish, the talk of the ordinary English people made her sick, she could not get enough exercise and the amusements in her locality seemed as flat as an opened can of coke that has been left standing for a while. When the phone rang again, feeling sure the same person was calling her, Adelina went to the phone, aggressively lifted the receiver, ready to give the caller a piece of her mind.

‘Yes,’ she said irritably.

‘Why did you cut me off? Are you upset...Look, are you coming to pick me up or not?’ Bono enquired.

‘This is a bad joke mister. Why don’t you go and bother someone else?’

After a brief silence, Bono said, ‘I see.’ He shook his head in disbelief as he slammed the receiver on the base unit and walked out of the booth, looking quite furious and confused.

Bono having just flown two hundred and fourteen miles into London Heathrow airport, was feeling quite tired, dehydrated and hungry. He was looking forward to a warm bath to relax his tired muscles and sharing a meal with his wife.

He and Adelina were married exactly one year ago after a very brief courtship and had moved from Swansea, South Wales, into a beautiful detached bungalow at 3, *Penny lane, SW1*. He had always wondered why she had chosen him over all the other men who were crazy about her, but Bono felt so lucky to have been the chosen one. He had met his wife at a nightclub where the latter used to sing. Her beautiful Russian voice, along with her gorgeous figure had gained her many admirers, much to the disapproval of Reddy, who disapproved when she saw Bono and Adelina had fallen for each other hook, line and sinker. She had since tried to come between them.

After the pair had tied the knot, Bono’s wife had reluctantly agreed to give up her singing career. Alas! She was not really the type who would stay at home painting her fingernails which she liked to keep unpainted and cut short, so she busied herself by finding alternative ways to occupy her time, like visiting the gym as often as her mood dictated and never missed an appointment with her hair dresser. Once a week she went to the beauty parlour for a facial and body massage where she would pick up the latest gossip. Frequently she went shopping with her best friend **Lorna** or shared a cup of cappuccino and exchanged tittle-tattles in her kitchen. Still she missed all the attention she used to get from her punters.

When Bono went off to Paris, Adelina had driven him to the airport, and before they had parted company, she’d given him a goodbye kiss, a much longer one than usual.

‘By the way,’ Bono told her, ‘the carpenter is coming to attend to a few things in the house. He knows what to do.’

‘Tell me you haven’t asked **Johnny** to do the alterations?’

‘Why not, he does a good job and he is cheap.’
‘Cheap yes, as for doing a good job, no.’
‘Let’s agree to disagree, shall we?’
‘Fine! Don’t expect me to supervise him.’
‘No need.’

Adelina was a bit peeved because she wanted to accompany her husband but much to her displeasure, Bono had decided otherwise. If it had not been for the poor internet connection, they would have kept in touch via videophone. However, Bono was not unduly bothered given that he knew most nights after his business meetings he would be exhausted and would not feel in the mood to talk. However, Adelina loved Paris. The last time she was there, she had enjoyed herself totally and had always wanted to go back and practice her broken French.

Given the nature of his business and armed with the knowledge that his wife had plenty to occupy herself with, Bono didn’t feel too guilty leaving her behind. Still after a week away, he expected to see his wife waiting for him at the airport, even though they’d made no previous arrangement. When she had not shown up, rightly or wrongly he felt let down, and in many ways worried.

The blonde woman at the airport, watching Bono at a distance, could see how worried he looked as he came out of the telephone booth. She had expected him to drop down unconscious, but when that didn’t happen she was itching to approach him and pretend to offer her help as a strategy to delay him whilst waiting for backup. Instead, she managed to keep control of her urge, which was just as well as she didn’t want to risk appearing too forward and frighten him away.

Bono, on observing the short-fat taxi driver still looking at him, finally decided to hire him.

‘Left stranded is it, sir?’ the taxi driver remarked audaciously.
Bono shamefacedly admitted with a grimace, ‘It looks like it!’

Prior to entering the cab, Bono took off his coat and placed it on his left arm, unaware that something had dropped out of his top coat-pocket and fallen to the floor. Once he was inside the cab, Bono asked the taxi driver for his name.

‘You can call me **Chico**,’ the taxi driver said.
‘Well Chico step on it.’
‘Don’t worry, sir; I know all the short cuts; where to sir?’
‘*3 Penny Lane, SW1.*’
‘Got it.’

The blonde woman rushed to pick up the fallen object but before she could hand it over to Bono, the taxi driver had driven off. She ran to her car as quickly as she could and chased after the taxi.

For a while, Chico had spotted a red car on his tail but kept quiet about it. As he approached a sharp bend, he decided to warn Bono.

‘Sir, I think we are being followed.’
‘Are you sure?’

‘Well that red car behind us has been there since we left the airport and has been flashing her stop light continuously.

Bono turned his head round to look through the rear window. ‘It looks like the driver is a woman.’

‘Do you know her, sir?’

‘I can’t say I do, I can’t make out who she is.’

Bono quickly memorised the registration number and ordered the driver to slow down. He let out a sigh of relief when the red car overtook them, but soon after, its hazard lights came on again as it slowed down before coming to a stop on the hard shoulder. Bono told Chico to stop too. He stepped out of the car almost at the same time as the mystery woman did. The latter walked towards him carrying her find in her hand and when they were at arms length, she handed it to him.

‘I believe this belongs to you,’ the woman said.

Bono took a quick look at it and said, ‘Oh, thank you very much.’

‘My pleasure... Have a nice day Mr Bono Spencer,’ she added cheerfully.

Taken aback by this Bono asked, ‘How did you know my name?’

She grinned cockily, ‘It’s engraved on the pen,’ and added, ‘whoever gave it to you must really love you.’

‘Oh, she does and I love her too... so much so that I married her.’

‘She must be very beautiful!’

‘She is,’ and with a gentle smile he added, ‘So are you! Thank you again for reuniting me with my pen, miss...’

‘Vinna... **Vinna Young**,’ the blonde woman responded and offered her hand for a kiss.

‘Err...maybe we could meet some day so that I can thank you properly Miss Young?’

‘You bet we will,’ she mumbled

‘I beg your pardon?’

‘I said, sure!’ Vinna rephrased her response, showing her beautiful shiny white teeth. ‘But now I must go... here, feel free to call me.’

They exchanged business cards.

‘An artist!’ Bono exclaimed as he looked at her card. ‘I’m impressed. Now we really must meet again.’

They exchanged smiles and she walked back to her car, watched keenly by Bono. She was pleased that she felt she had attracted and interested him, as she knew intuitively that she did.

For a moment, Bono wondered how Vinna had his pen, but he was so glad to have it back he cleared his mind of that thought and told Chico to hurry him home.

He would have normally stopped at a florist and bought a bunch of roses for his wife, something he always did but on this occasion, he decided to leave that for another day. All kinds of thoughts kept invading his mind, he kept pushing them away

and wanting to believe everything was just a total misunderstanding.

For a while, there was silence. Chico put his foot down on the gas pedal and sped his cab along a winding road. He was driving so fast that most of the time he wasn't keeping to his side of the road, causing Bono to complain.

'Hey Chico, I would really like to reach home in one piece.'

'Don't worry Sir, you will,' said Chico as he made a gesture of slowing down a bit only to speed up slowly soon after.

An hour later, Bono's taxi arrived at his house. He got out of the cab, paid Chico and whilst waiting for the taxi man to open the boot so that he could get his suitcase out, Chico drove off.

'Hey, my suitcase!' Bono shouted in vain. The taxi disappeared.

Bono entered his house via the back door of the kitchen. As he set foot inside he nearly hit a suitcase which was resting on the floor and which looked identical to his. He saw his wife standing in front of the cooker with her back towards him.

With a touch of anger in his voice he asked, 'Why didn't you come and pick me up?' and walked straight towards the drink stand and poured a large whisky in a glass, which he swallowed in one gulp.

On hearing a voice, Adelina turned round and with a dropped lower jaw she stared at Bono, lost for words. Maintaining her gaze she slowly leaned against the cooker feeling paralysed.

Bono said loudly, 'What's the matter with you? Cat got your tongue?'

In the lounge, Bo in his dressing gown was reading the morning newspaper. On hearing the loud voice, he rushed into the kitchen and saw the strange look on Adelina's face.

'What's up, you look like you have seen a ghost...'

Before he had received an answer, Bo gazed towards his left and noticed Bono. The two men ogled each other in disbelief at what they were seeing. Eyes wide opened, they moved tentatively closer to each other in order to have a better view.

'Well, I'll be damned,' Bo said, 'I didn't know I had a twin brother...'

The two men were mirror images of each other. Bo tried to touch Bono's face to check if he was wearing a mask, but the latter pulled away.

'Bo turned to Adelina and said, 'this is amazing, what an uncanny resemblance, don't you think?'

Adelina could barely nod.

Bono's curiosity kicked in. With a frown he questioned, 'Who are you?'

'I was going to ask you the same question, pal,' said Bo whilst moving closer adopting a threatening posture.

Smelling trouble Adelina rushed to Bo and held his arm with both hands.

In a nervous voice referring to Bono, she mumbled to herself, 'that must have been the man who phoned earlier.' Taking a deep breath, she echoed aloud, 'yes who are you? What do you want with us?'

Bono gasped, his face a mask of shock.

'Who is this guy Adelina?' he asked inquisitively.

Adelina retorted immediately. 'I don't find you amusing mister, whoever you are.'

'Are you kidding me, Adelina?' Bono with creased forehead, questioned. 'Are you really saying that you can't tell the difference?'

Adelina straight away clung to Bo and remarked, 'he even knows my name...' which prompted Bo to cut in.

'You look here... what are you doing in my house?'

'Ah ha! Your house, is it?' Bono parroted. 'Listen pal this is my house,' and pointing to Adelina, 'this is my wife... the dressing gown you are wearing is my dressing gown... and if you must know I am Bono Spencer.'

Bo chuckled.

'Are you now? That's very funny because I am Bono Spencer, though my wife Adelina, sometimes call me Bo.'

'Well Bo, let me tell you that you are a phoney passing yourself as me... you may have succeeded in fooling my wife, but not me.'

Bo took a step forward his face close to that of Bono. 'You'd better get out of here before I throw you out,' he threatened.

'Oh yeah,' Bono said defiantly. 'Just try and see how far you get.'

Biting his lip, Bo replied, 'I'm warning you...'

Refusing to be intimidated, Bono said, 'You think you can just move in pretending to be me and make yourself comfortable?'

Bo repeated his warning more strongly.

Staring fiercely he said, 'Didn't you hear me telling you to get out of here?'

Bono had had a few fights in his life and decided to shut Bo up. He turned his back half way pretending he was leaving and then he unexpectedly took a swing at Bo, but the latter was quick to react by ducking thus avoided being hit. As Bo tried to respond with his fist, Adelina got between them.

'Adelina,' Bono said pleadingly, 'I am truly your husband, he is...'

'He is my husband,' Adelina concluded his sentence. She immediately moved closer to Bo showing her affirmation.

'Could you now please get out of here and leave us alone, before I call the police.'

'The police... oh yes... okay. Go ahead call the police,' Bono challenged her.

Whilst Bono was turning round to take a seat, Bo grabbed him by the neck; frog-marched him to the back door, pushed him out of the house causing the latter to lose his balance and fall down on his backside.

‘Now go away, and stay away!’ Bo asserted, slamming the door shut and turned the key to lock it.

Adelina, with trepidation, watched Bono pick himself up and make his way towards the front gate, looking furious. He had hardly reached the front gate when Sergeant **Dixon** and Constable **Johnson** arrived and stopped him.

‘Are you alright, sir?’ Sergeant Dixon enquired.

‘No I’m not.’

‘What’s the problem?’

‘I’ll tell you what the problem is... I have just been kicked out of my own house, that’s the problem. Can you believe that?’

‘I certainly can. Only last week I dealt with such a case.’ Constable Johnson said. ‘Err... you are Mister...?’

‘Bono, Bono Spencer and this is my house and in there you will find my wife with a stranger.’

Bono accompanied the two police officers to the back door. He tried the door handle but found the door was locked. He reached for his key and inserted it in the lock only to discover it did not fit.

‘Is that the correct key, sir?’ Sergeant Dixon asked.

‘Err... Yes,’ Bono replied with cautious certainty in his voice.

Constable Johnson immediately rang the doorbell. Within seconds, Bo came to open the door. When the police officers saw that he looked exactly like Bono, they shook their heads in amazement.

‘Are you two gentleman twins?’ the police officers asked almost simultaneously.

‘Certainly not.’ Bo was first to deny.

‘Erh... I am Sergeant Dixon and this is Constable Johnson. Can we come in?’ he asked.

‘Oh, sure,’ said Bo and he opened the door wider before closing it again after everyone was inside.

In the lounge, Adelina was sitting down on a settee looking uneasy. When she saw the policemen enter, she got up and greeted them.

‘Which one of you called the police?’ Sergeant Dixon asked.

‘I did,’ Adelina admitted. Then (pointing to Bono) ‘this man let himself in, and claimed to be my husband!’

‘Is he?’

‘Certainly not,’ she replied with some hesitation in her voice.

‘How did he get in?’

‘The back door was open...I always leave it like that when I am cooking... the smell you see...’

‘Yes yes, I understand. My wife does exactly the same thing,’ Sergeant Dixon said with a light grin.

Bo cut in. ‘This guy is crazy. He walked in here claiming this house is his.’

‘Is it?’ Constable Johnson asked.

‘No.’ Adelina intervened. ‘When he tried to pick a fight I decided to call the police.’

‘Very wise, Ma’am,’ Constable Johnson praised her.

Turning to Bono, Sergeant Dixon asked, ‘well sir what is your story?’

Bono was livid.

'Look officer this is my house and (pointing to Adelina), this woman is my wife... this door on my right takes you to the bedroom upstairs... No doubt this man knows all about that since he is wearing my dressing gown.'

After a brief silence Bono continued, pointing to Bo, 'I don't know who this guy is but I'm sure going to find out.'

Constable Johnson went to open the door Bono had claimed led to upstairs and found it was a broom cupboard. He looked at Bono with a frown and the latter couldn't understand why that was the case.

'Look officer I have been away for a week, there was a carpenter doing some work for me, he could have changed it.'

Adelina cut in. 'As you can see, this man is as confused as a bat and crazy too. What are you waiting for? Take him away.'

'You wish to make a complaint Ma'am?' Sergeant Dixon asked.

'Erm... I don't want to get him into trouble. He is obviously sick. He needs a shrink.'

'You may well be right,' Sergeant Dixon said and turned to Bono. 'Come with us Sir and stop bothering these people.' He grabbed his right hand.

'Ouch!' Bono cried out as he detached his hand from the grip of the police officer.

'What's up?'

'My forefinger has been hurting me, I don't know why.'

'A touch of arthritis, maybe?'

'Officer, wait a minute,' Bono insisted and pulled out his passport from the inside of his jacket pocket. 'Here, take a look at this.'

As Sergeant Dixon looked at the document, Bo appeared uncomfortable and quickly intervened and manufactured an untruthful account but managed to sell it successfully to Sergeant Dixon.

'Oh, that's what happened... you see officer,' he explained. 'This morning in the arrival lounge at London Heathrow I unwisely rested my jacket on my suitcase, whilst I got into the telephone booth to call my wife. When I came out, I noticed my jacket, which contained my passport, was gone. Now it is clear he took it.'

'You have been away, Sir?' Sergeant Dixon asked Bo.

'Yes, to Paris. I arrived this morning by Air France flight AF 1780 which landed at exactly 06:25... If you go into the kitchen you will see my suitcase which I have yet to unpack.'

'Don't listen to his tales officer.' Bono immediately protested. 'I have just returned from Paris.'

'By the same flight?' Sergeant Dixon asked.

'Yes.'

'Ah ha! Where is your suitcase?'

'Err... the taxi man who brought me here drove away with it.'

'Very convenient I see,' Sergeant Dixon said as he caressed his moustache.

'It's true!,' Bono asserted.

Bono quickly grabbed a piece of paper lying on the dining table and voluntarily provided a sample of his signature. 'Check this and you will find it matches with that on the passport.'

Sergeant Dixon also asked Bo to provide a sample of his signature. When he compared both signatures to that on the passport, he displayed a huge grin on his face. He looked suspiciously at Bono and showed him both samples, saying, 'You see sir, you gave me the proof I needed. As you can see his signature matches perfectly but yours does not...'

'What?' Bono complained. 'No one could give an identical copy of a signature especially with a painful forefinger.'

'He did!' Sergeant Dixon retorted and turned to Constable Johnson, 'take his arm.'

Sergeant Dixon grabbed Bono's other arm and they proceeded to take Bono away whilst he struggled to break free.

'Wait one moment please!' Bono pleaded and the officers let go of his arms.

'What now?' Sergeant Dixon uttered appearing irritated. 'We are satisfied that you are the phoney... *you have a door key that does not fit the door of this house which you claim is yours. You claimed you have just returned from Paris but have no suitcase declaring the taxi driver drove away with it. You claimed this is your house yet you wrongly identify the door leading to the bedroom upstairs. You provided a signature that does not match with a passport you said is yours. Your own wife denies you are her husband...*'

'Officer,' Bono begged. 'You are mistaken...'

'No, it's you, who is mistaken,' Sergeant Dixon reinforced. 'Now come with us quietly please.'

'You haven't checked our finger prints,' Bono pointed out.

'No need,' said the Sergeant. 'We have all the proof we need.'

Bono looked at Adelina with pleading eyes as he was being taken away.

'Adelina, tell the officers they've got it wrong.'

Adelina shook her head. 'Take him away officers and get him the medical help he clearly needs.'

The two police officers held Bono Spencer by his arms and frog-marched him to their vehicle whilst he continued to protest that they were making a mistake. ✍

CHAPTER 2 *Bono on the run*

As soon as Bono was taken off the property, Bo got on the phone to call his boss.
'Hey boss?'

'Yes.'

'It worked. Swapping that dude's passport with a doctored one worked like a charm. The police did not believe his story. They've got him in their car right now and are driving him away.'

'Good.' The line went dead. Bo moved back into the lounge and saw Adelina sitting down looking worried.

'What's up?' he asked.

'What will the police do to that poor confused man?' Adelina asked. 'I hope they'll get him some help?'

'Hmmm. I'm sure they will.'

'I wonder why the police didn't check his fingerprints, they would have discovered he was fibbing...'

'Just as well,' Bo mumbled to himself.

'Did you say something dear?'

'No,' Bo shook his head as he tried to hide what he was really thinking.

Bo knew he would have inadvertently let the police have his fingerprints when they gave him the use of their pen to provide the sample signature! It was clumsy of him but he couldn't really tell the officer that he would use his own pen as this would have raised their suspicions. Anyway, Bo quickly brushed aside his wandering thoughts, but realising Bono was a bomb waiting to explode, he couldn't afford to have him running loose or in police custody. He trusted his boss would see that Bono was contained somehow; at least until he had left the country with all the cash his boss has promised him. He quickly sought assurance from his boss that that would be the case and he gave his word that it would.

After watching the spectacle of Bono in front of the police, Adelina was troubled. She felt something was not quite right, but couldn't put her finger on what it was. She also felt Bo was not telling her everything. She picked up a wine glass and filled it up whilst Bo left her to simmer. A degree of doubt began to germinate in her mind.

Outside the house in the police car Bono couldn't believe Adelina didn't side with him. *How callous*, he thought. He found it hard to understand why his wife couldn't tell the difference between him and Bo. *All right, they looked alike and sounded alike*, he admitted, *but surely, a woman would not allow herself to be so*

easily fooled! Maybe she knew exactly what she was doing and was playing along with Bo. If so, how did the latter manage to persuade her to behave that way? Bono continued to soliloquize. *Could she have been acting under some kind of duress? Could she be a victim of a nasty plot? Could she be complicit to a plan?* Whatever the reason he was determined to find out. He knew it was no use relying on the police to help him, as they appeared to be convinced he was a phoney, a look-alike who was a nuisance to the public and probably sick in the head. Suddenly Bono looked through the car window and noticed the police car had passed the police station. Just before he was driven away, Bono had observed Sergeant Dixon talking on his Walkie talkie.

‘Hey!’ Bono shouted, ‘you have just passed the police station, why didn’t you stop?’

‘Who said we’re going to the police station?’ Constable Johnson responded.

‘Where are you taking me then?’

When Bono received no answer he asked, ‘Are you really policemen?’

Sergeant Dixon turned himself round and pointed to his police badge.

‘Quite a good imitation,’ Bono remarked suspiciously with a grimace.

‘Yes I got it from a Christmas cracker,’ the sergeant responded sarcastically with a puckered brow.

‘That must be where you got it,’ Bono answered with a smirk and looked away, shaking his head.

A few yards further down a winding road, the police car stopped at a set of traffic lights. Bono looked at his handcuffs and wondered if he could kick the door open and run out of the car. As he was about to do so, the traffic lights changed to green and they were on the move again. He fiddled with the cuffs in the hope of freeing himself but soon gave up as he could see it was hopeless. *Who is that fucker who invented this restraining device?* He grumbled to himself. The car took a left turn and drove to the entrance of a huge building. In front of it was a board with the inscription: Tony Gilbert Unit. Bono reacted immediately.

‘Why have you brought me here?’ he questioned. ‘This is a secure unit for the mentally disturbed.’

‘You’ve been here, have you?’ Sergeant Dixon asked.

‘No, never... I just happen to know its function.’

When the car came to a halt, Constable Johnson opened the back door and let Bono out.

‘You’re not going to take me in there!’ Bono protested.

‘We want a psychiatrist to examine you first.’

‘Officer there is nothing wrong with me. I’ve been telling you the truth.’

‘Then you have nothing to fear. As soon as the doctor gives you a clean-bill of health you’ll be released.’

Bono reluctantly walked to the door of the unit and Sergeant Dixon pressed the buzzer. Moments later, a tall man dressed in a white tunic opened the door wearing a badge attached to his lapel. Printed on it in gold letters was the title STAFF NURSE and immediately underneath was, the name **Mario Maccini**, but he was often called **Twoface** because of his tendency to be insincere. The minute Twoface set eyes on Bono he grinned.

Addressing the police officers, ‘So you found him at last,’ Twoface remarked.

‘Oh, do you know him?’ Constable Johnson asked.

‘Of course...’

‘Ah ha!’

Bono immediately objected to the remark. He knew he had never met Twoface. Biting his lip Bono could not believe that only a few hours ago he was a free man planning to take his wife to Blackpool resort to celebrate their first year wedding anniversary. Here he was inside a secure unit, where even the nurse appeared to be involved in what he saw as a conspiracy against him for reasons he could not understand.

Sergeant Dixon followed Twoface to the nursing station whilst Bono was kept behind guarded by Constable Johnson.

At the nursing station, Sergeant Dixon whispered to Twoface, 'how do you know this guy?'

'He ran away from this place a week ago,' said Twoface.

'You mean he was a patient here?'

'Yes... for the last three months...'

'He claimed his name is Bono Spencer. Is it?'

'That's strange, I know him as **Bo Greene**. He was doing very well.'

'What's the matter with him?'

'He is a psychopath suffering from delusions of persecution.'

'Delusion of persecution?' the officer echoed.

'Yes. This is the most common form of delusional disorder. In this form, the affected person fears they are being stalked, spied upon, obstructed, poisoned, conspired against or harassed by other individuals or an organization.'

'Sounds dangerous... can the person become a nuisance or even violent?'

'Of course. The sufferer may retaliate violently against the persecutor and/or turn to the law and other government agencies for support.'

'I've got it... that explains it,' Sergeant Dixon mumbled.

'Explains what?'

The Sergeant frowned and suddenly turned serious. 'Never mind... just make sure he doesn't run away again, will you?'

What Twoface didn't reveal was that Bo Greene was going to go to prison for manslaughter but was sent to the unit by the court after **Dr Durant** had made a case that Bo would benefit more by being in the unit.

Sergeant Dixon was happy that Bono was to be locked up in the unit and would be receiving the treatment he needed. He was also relieved he would not be bothering any one. Once the paperwork was completed, the police officers left the unit whilst Twoface took Bono to a cubicle.

'Put on these pyjamas and get into bed Bo,' Twoface instructed. 'Dr Durant is on his way to see you.'

'I am not Bo... My name is Bono you idiot... Bono Spencer!' Bono insisted angrily.

'Your wife told me you like to be called Bo.'

'Have you met my wife?'

'Once... no twice actually, during her visits here,' Twoface lied and left the room temporarily.

Twoface appeared baffled that Bono objected to being called Bo, when for the last three months, as far as he was concerned, he had called him by that name, and he

had never complained. Another odd thing he noticed was that Bono had a wedding ring on his finger.

Bono was just getting into bed when he noticed **Dr Durant** at his elbow. He had not seen him approach and the sudden appearance made him start. The doctor was a slim grey-hair man in his fifties, clean-shaven, blue eyes with a stethoscope around his neck and was a respected consultant psychiatrist with many years of experience in treating individuals with mental health problems. Dr Durant reminded Bono of the TV Doctor whose many episodes he had watched with great enjoyment.

‘Nice to have you back,’ Dr Durant said. ‘I need to give you a quick medical check up,’ he said and began to examine Bono.

During the physical examination, Dr Durant was surprised to notice the birthmark on his right buttock had vanished. Since many birthmarks change, grow, shrink, or even disappear, he thought no further about it.

‘Why did you run away, Bo? You were doing so well.’

‘I’m not Bo. My name is Bono and who are you?’ Bono asked.

Dr Durant grinned.

‘You know who I am... I am Dr. Durant and you are Bo... correction Bono. Right?’

‘Yes, Bono Spencer — an art dealer... The man you presumably know, whom you call Bo, has settled himself in my home.’

‘Has he now,’ Dr Durant replied, ‘What does your wife say at that?’

‘Erm... she is there with him... she is convinced that Bo is me.’

‘Interesting... You mean even your wife doesn’t recognise you?’

‘That man Bo looks exactly like me.’

‘Oh! A double... how fascinating.’ Dr Durant wore a huge grin and appeared not to believe a word Bono had uttered.

When Bo Greene was brought to his unit three months ago for a course of treatment, Dr Durant had started him on a course of Trifluoperazine, an anti-psychotic drug which works by changing the actions of chemicals in the brain. It’s frequently used to treat anxiety or psychotic disorders such as schizophrenia. Bo Greene had been responding well but always hated being on the unit.

‘You don’t believe me do you, doctor?’ Bono asked sounding helpless.

Dr. Durant refrained from telling Bono what he really thought. Instead, he increased the medication and prescribed a course of ECT (Electro Convulsive Therapy).

As he left, he handed the case notes to staff nurse Mario (Twoface) Maccini and said, ‘I’m afraid his delusion has got worse... By the way, the birthmark on his right buttock has faded away.’

‘Oh, I thought they stay for life,’ Twoface remarked.

‘Not always,’ Dr Durant confirmed and left the unit.

Sensing that neither Dr Durant nor Twoface believed his story, Bono realised if he was to help himself he had to find a way out of that unit.

Twoface came to check on him and Bono asked him, ‘Can I tell you something in confidence?’

‘I can’t promise you that, but once you’ve told me, only then will I be able to

decide if I should keep the information to myself or divulge it to others.'

'I understand. Look I need help more than any man ever needed it...'

'You'll get all the help you need here.'

'That's not what I meant.'

'Oh!'

Bono braced himself for a great effort and then started on what appeared to be a tediously long, complicated explanation of his situation. Twoface didn't understand it at first, and he had to stop and ask him questions. In the process he learnt some queer things that explained a lot that had puzzled him—things that had happened when Bono had arrived at his house, how the police had refused to finger print him, why his signature didn't match with that on his passport and why he got the door to the upstairs bedroom wrong.

Twoface found Bono's account very fascinating and wanted to hear more. Bono grabbed a squash bottle and poured some in a glass. He swallowed a mouthful before continuing. Although Twoface appeared interested in his story, Bono was not sure whether Twoface believed him. Suddenly, Bono heard a noise coming from the street. He looked through the window and saw two men standing outside the Unit—one lean, sharp and dark, the other comfortable and smiling. Bono had a feeling that the men were keeping watch on him. Twoface's voice sharpened a bit as he grabbed Bono's attention and asked him to continue. After listening for almost half an hour Twoface thought for an instant or two.

'I could lose my job if I do what you are asking... look let me think about it...'

'I understand but if you... okay please think seriously about it, I'm desperate,' Bono said sounding disappointed and sad.

Left alone in his room Bono had time to reflect on his situation. He examined the only window in his room and found it was a long way down. If he had any thoughts of jumping out, that option was clearly out. He knew he had to figure out a way of getting out of the unit so that he could investigate why Bo was passing himself off as him. Knowing that Bo was receiving treatment in the unit was useful, but none of that helped his case if he couldn't prove his identity. One person who could help him, he thought, was his partner Reddy (so called because of her beautiful red hair). He tried in vain to ring her. The office number appeared permanently engaged and the message '*try later*' was the response he got whenever he rang her mobile.

Meanwhile Twoface was also reflecting on the conversation he had had with Bono. Part of him wanted to help, but he was quite aware he could lose his job if he acted unprofessionally. He struggled to let the entire conversation slip clean out of his memory, then the phone rang and he picked it up. The voice on the other end of the line issued a frightening warning. He put the receiver back on its cradle and looked petrified. The thought that he would be killed if he didn't do as he was instructed by the caller concentrated his mind. Later on that afternoon, he came back into Bono's room and found him facing towards the wall appearing to be asleep.

'Can you hear me?' Twoface whispered.

'What is it?' Bono said faintly.

'Right. I will see what I can do for you... just one word, Bo...'

'Not Bo,' Bono corrected him; 'Bono Spencer, art dealer from London,' and in a pleading voice he uttered, 'I'm not telling you stories.'

'This afternoon you are scheduled for your first course of ECT. This is what I want you to do. Remember, say nothing to no one, you hear?'

‘Understood!’

Later that afternoon, Bono opened his eyes when he heard Twoface’s voice. The latter had been chatting on the phone for a while. Getting Twoface on his side was the best way of escaping from that secure unit. At 4.00, P.M. Twoface was escorting Bono to the ECT unit, which was a block away. They walked through a long corridor, with Twoface lagging slightly behind. As they reached a t-junction, the fire alarm went off causing a frenzy amongst those occupying the corridor. Bono took the left turn. Twoface shouted, ‘stop!’ but someone quickly gagged him and seconds later he was lying on the floor whilst Bono continue to run away unimpeded. As soon as Bono got out he avoided the main gate and took the back alley which led to a side street. Unexpectedly, Vinna cornered him and signalled him to a little mini as getaway. Bono needed all the help he could get and gladly accepted the offer.

In the car Bono asked, ‘What brought you my way?’

‘Well it’s a long story. I’ll tell you when we get home.’

Vinna drove Bono speedily to her cottage. After opening her front door, she motioned him in. No sooner than Bono was over the threshold, he made a dash for a back room, where Vinna used to smoke and read her books but almost immediately back-tracked.

‘Is the door locked?’ he asked feverishly and he fastened the door chain with his own hand. ‘I’m very sorry,’ he said humbly. ‘It’s a mighty liberty, but you looked like the kind of woman who would understand. Being able to escape from that dreadful unit was not easy. Say, will you do me another good turn?’

‘All I can promise is a listening ear,’ Vinna said graciously.

Vinna was getting worried about how nervous Bono was. There was a tray of drinks on a corner table; she poured him a stiff whisky. He drank it in three gulps and cracked the glass as he set it down.

‘Forgive me,’ Bono said, ‘I’m a bit rattled. ‘You see, I think there is a conspiracy against me. Right this moment there is a man who looks just like me in my house pretending to be me.’

‘My goodness,’ Vinna said, looking horrified.

She took a seat near him. ‘What about your wife?’ She asked.

‘She told the police that the stranger is her husband.’

‘And they took you away?’

Bono nodded his head and ran a hand through his hair as if to comb it. His black hair was short and loosely curled and what gray there was, collected evenly along the sides. A fine, thin moustache covered his face.

They shared another drink and continued their chat.

‘Tell me, what brought you to be near the Tony Gilbert Unit?’

‘Well it’s a long story.’

‘I’m listening.’

‘I’m ashamed to admit it, but I’ve been following you.’ She proceeded to tell him a fantastic story with partial truths... ‘When I saw your face at the airport getting out of the telephone booth I could see you looked troubled and I wanted to offer you

my help! Then the taxi man attracted your attention and I thought I'd missed my chance but I got lucky when I saw your pen drop out of your coat pocket whilst you entered the taxi. You know what happened next, but what you obviously didn't know was, using the information on your business card I entered your address in my SatNav and followed you discretely home.'

'Did you also see me being driven away in a police car?'

'Yes. I knew then you were in real trouble. At the time, I thought you'd probably had a bitter disagreement with your wife and she had called the police. But what I couldn't understand was why they took you to a secure unit instead of the police station... that got me thinking... I'm a good judge of character... I said to myself that a man with such beautiful blue eyes like yours couldn't be that bad... I mean insane.'

'You've got one thing right. I'm not mad, but the police chose to believe that imposter's story instead of mine.'

'Very strange! Have you met that man before?'

'Never. But whilst being locked in the Tony Gilbert Unit I got to know some information about him. His name is *Bo Greene*, a psychopath with delusional ideas...'

'Oh right! How about I go with you to the police station and I vouch for you?'

'No. It won't work. Firstly, we hardly know each other, but more importantly Twoface, a Staff Nurse at the unit erroneously identified me to the police as Bo Greene and that psychiatrist, Dr Durant, who visited me, thinks that too. They're both wrong of course. That's why I suspect there is some kind of conspiracy going on. I have definitely been framed good and proper.'

'Don't be so defeatist! We'll find a way to prove to the authorities that you are the real Bono Spencer.'

'I admire your confidence. How I wish I could share your assurance.'

'You must know other people or someone who could vouch for you?'

'Well there is my partner Reddy, but she seems to have gone missing.'

'Missing?'

'I've called her at the office and also called her mobile, sadly no response.'

'Maybe we could surprise her with a visit to the office tomorrow; anyone else?'

'Yes but it's a long shot.'

'How long?'

'She...' Bono hesitated and the silence allowed Vinna to hear her blood rushing through her ears, roaring like a spring runoff. 'She is an ex-girl friend of mine. I don't think she would help because I let her down badly.'

'You never know, she may still carry a torch for you. What's her name?'

'**Melanie**...I don't think she would care now.'

'Why, is she married?'

'Yes, on the rebound.'

'I think she may still be worth a shot!!! Err... Look, this is an isolated area; you're going to be safe here... I need to pick up a few things from the supermarket round the corner. Will you be alright for a moment on your own?'

'You go ahead. I'll be okay.'

'I won't be long. Make yourself at home. Feel free to take a shower.'

'Thank you.'

As soon as Vinna left, Bono received a call from an unknown caller. It was almost as if someone was waiting for him to be alone.

‘Mr Spencer?’

‘Yes.’

‘Bono Spencer?’

‘Yes, I am he.’

‘I think we should meet.’

‘Why? Who are you?’

‘Be patient. All will be revealed in good time. There is something of mutual interest we need to discuss.’

‘Until I know who I’m talking to, we’re not discussing anything.’

‘Mr Spencer,’ the voice said in a cajoling manner, ‘don’t be difficult... If you refuse I’m going to inform the police of your whereabouts... I know the police are looking for you... Do we understand each other now?’

Bono was momentarily lost for words. Just when he thought he was safe, he suddenly found himself dealing with a man without a name or a face ready to grass on him. He remained silent but thoughtful.

‘I think I’ve got your attention...’ the caller said. ‘Just look through your window and you will see a black Sedan.’

Bono walked to the window and saw two men dressed in suits, raincoats and bowler hats standing by the passenger side of the car. They appeared to be the same two guys he had seen previously from the window of the Tony Gilbert Unit.

‘Who are these guys?’ Bono asked.

‘Nothing to worry about, think of them as your shadow... I can’t wait to meet you,’ the mystery caller said.

Bono cut off. He quickly scribbled a note for Vinna, left it on the coffee table and then left the house.

It was exactly six o’clock when Bono was driven to a huge mansion and taken to a spacious long room lavishly furnished with bookcases housing lots of leather bound books. Suspended from the ceilings were three Italian chandeliers with several oil paintings hanging on the walls. At the far end of the room, sitting behind a huge mahogany desk looking very majestic was a grey-hair Caucasian man sporting a wide moustache and a shiny gold-tooth.

Bono stood by the entrance door clearly impressed with the richness of his surroundings, particularly the costly rare paintings.

‘Come forward Mr Spencer,’ the grey-hair man beckoned, wearing a huge smile, ‘or should I say Mr Doppelganger.’

Bono grinned as he walked forward tentatively. ‘You seem to have me at a disadvantage.’

‘Not at all.’

‘Oh, yes. You seem to know me and judging at how well this room alone is decorated—which must have cost you a fortune—you are clearly a very wealthy man. Something I can’t say about myself,’ Bono said as he took a few steps forward. ‘So if

you are planning to extract money from me or planning to make me do something against my wishes by threatening me, let me say you are wasting your time.'

'You read me wrong Mr Spencer...Err...Any idea who I am?'

'Should I?'

'Hmmm... Does the name **Jonathan Crown**, mean anything to you?'

Bono's eyes glared. He had never met Jonathan Crown but had certainly heard the name. 'Erm... you are the CEO of Crown Industries, am I right?'

The man, looking serious, nodded.

'You see Mr Spencer, I know that right this very moment there is a man with your face posing as you and occupying your house. I also know that the police think you are him and he is you. I can change that.'

'How?'

'I'm a man not exactly without influence. With power you can achieve anything. But if I'm to help you, the least you can do is to do something for me in return.'

'Like what?'

'I have a job for you.'

Bono quickly responded. 'No thanks. I already have a job and a good one too.'

'Yes, yes, I know, but this is a one-off job and you would be handsomely rewarded. After that, you would be able to go back to your wife and carry on with your life... You do want your wife back don't you?'

'Well my wife has already deserted me.'

'Don't be harsh on her, Mr Spencer. She may be operating under duress or could have been duped in one way or another. Have you considered that?'

His forehead creased. 'What is it that you want me to do?'

'Kill someone.'

'You do come straight to the point, don't you?'

'There is no point beating around the bush.'

A stunned Bruno with a huge grimace shook his head. 'I'm afraid you misjudged me. If it's a killer you need, then find yourself someone else which should not be too difficult with all the money you obviously have? I'm no killer.'

'Are you sure about that, Mr Spencer?'

'What the hell do you mean by that? Okay I know I've killed in the war, but this is different.'

'What about that nurse in the Tony Gilbert Unit?'

'Who? Twoface? He is a nice man.'

'Yes a very, very nice man. Is that why you strangled him?'

'I what?' A shocked Bono questioned, 'Twoface strangled? Why would I do such a thing when he helped me to escape?'

'Why indeed!' Jonathan said and with a stern voice he added, 'As far as the police are concerned, you strangled him in order to make your escape... by tomorrow morning your face will be on the front page of every major newspaper as the *Tony Gilbert Strangler* and every policeman will be on the look out for you.'

'I didn't strangle anyone!' Bono said defiantly.

'I know that Mr Spencer, but the authorities believe you are Bo Greene and you committed the crime. This is why I want to help you denounce the real Bo Greene. I don't want an innocent man like you to end up in prison for a crime you didn't commit.'

'But now you want me to commit a crime... for curiosity sake, who do you want me to kill?'

Jonathan turned his gaze at a painting of a woman hanging on the wall.

‘You see, Mr Spencer, exactly one year ago I lost my wife in a hit and run accident. Ever since then my life has not been the same. I have spent lots of money to find out who did it.’

‘Did you succeed?’

‘Yes, the culprit is the wife of Lord Longfellow. Now I want her to pay. In return, whilst I may not be able to get my wife back, I can help you get yours if you will only help me achieve my aim...with your help I have the perfect plan to get Bo Greene out of your life and put him away for good where he belongs, which is prison.’

After a moment of reflection, ‘You want me to kill her?’

Jonathan looked at him and nodded. ‘As they say, if *you scratch my back, I’ll scratch yours.*’

‘You’re crazy!’

Jonathan Crown staring at the picture of his wife and pleaded, ‘This was my wife. Thanks to this Lordship’s wife, my wife is now resting in a cemetery and she will never rest in peace until I exact justice.’

‘Why don’t you let the law deal with it?’

‘What law? Has the law helped you?’

‘They will when I can prove my identity.’

‘You think you’ll be able to? Just wait until you discover how corrupt the police are!’

‘Still, I’ll give it a good go. When the police check me out thoroughly they will discover the truth.’

‘Why do you think they haven’t done that already?’

‘Because... err... because I was confused and my wife did not vouch for me.’

‘If you think so badly about her, what makes you think she will change her mind and vouch for you the second time round?’

‘Stop messing with my head. Besides, if I’m to kill anyone, surely the person I should kill is that imposter... at least this will free my wife from this psychopath.’

‘Don’t be so naïve Mr Spencer, what do you think will happen to you after you have murdered the person the police and your wife believe is Bono Spencer, a respectable art dealer, however erroneously that may be?’ After a pause, Jonathan continued, ‘my way the police will have two likely suspects to choose from. That is where I would be able to help you establish and prove your case. I know something about him that you do not know which would prove he is Bo Greene, hence the killer they are looking for.’

Bono reflected then said, ‘I need time to think about this.’

‘Mr Spencer,’ Jonathan said, ‘you have a clear choice. You can either do this one little job for me and I’ll free you of that imposter and return you your freedom and your wife, or you can go on the run for ever until the law catches up with you, which they will, and put you away for a murder you didn’t commit...’ After a brief pause he added, ‘You have until tomorrow morning. Choose wisely.’

When Vinna came back from the supermarket and found Bono gone, she immediately thought the worst and felt guilty for having left him alone. Given there

was no obvious sign of foul play, she wondered if he had left voluntarily. Her assumption appeared to have proven right when she noticed a hand-written note saying, '*Had to go somewhere.*' She felt relieved that nothing bad had happened to him, but immediately doubted the note, since he may have written it under duress. She needed to stay positive and did her best to banish the nasty thoughts from her mind. Still for the next half hour, she remained tense. Suddenly she was reassured when Bono reappeared. Vinna's natural inclination was to hug him, but she refrained from doing so or even questioning where he went.

Instead, she said, 'You're just in time to taste my Spaghetti Bolognese... help me lay the table will you please.'

'Of course.'

Bono helped Vinna to prepare the table and they sat down together for a meal.

'How come you haven't asked me where I went?' Bono asked.

'Not necessary,' Vinna answered dismissively shrugging her shoulders. 'Err... pass me the salt would you please.' After a short pause, 'this Melanie woman, where does she live?'

'In Swansea, South Wales.'

'Do you have her number?'

'Yes.'

Vinna twisted some spaghetti round her fork and before placing it in her mouth she said, 'I think you should call her! Or just send her a text and see if she responds.'

Bono rested his knife and fork, on the rim of his plate and sat back in his chair. 'You really think this is a good idea?'

'Uh huh!' Vinna nodded with a confident smile.

Bono blinked and Vinna pressed her lips together, touched his hand and prepared to leave the table. She hesitated a moment then added, 'What have you got to lose?'

Moments later, she returned and said, 'Now, we need to get some sleep. You will camp in the guest room.'

'Thank you!'

'Did you take a shower?'

'I wouldn't mind one now, if that's okay with you.'

'Please do. You should find a fresh towel on the rail. I'll prepare your bed...by the way, be careful when opening the hot tap, the water can be very hot.'

'Thanks for the warning.'

Vinna left the room. ✍

CHAPTER 3 *A friend in need.*

Day Two

Wednesday, 20, November, 00:10 A.M.

It was a long sleepless night for Bono. The thought of going through with Jonathan's suggestion made him sick. Particularly killing a woman he had never met and had no qualms with - it filled him with horror, even though carrying such an act could be to his advantage. He sat back in his bed and recalled seeing men die violently before; indeed, he had killed some himself in the Iraqi War; but this cold-blooded indoor business was different. Somehow, he managed to pull himself together. He looked at his watch and saw that it was half-past two in the morning. He checked his phone to see if he had received a reply to his text to Melanie. There were three messages waiting for him. The first was from his service provider reminding him to top up. The second was from his bank confirming that they had applied the payment of £10.99 to his credit card... and there it was, a much-awaited response from Melanie agreeing to meet with him. By this time, his wits had come back to him and he could think again and had come to a decision. He'd noticed a computer downstairs and he went to check the train timetable. If he was to catch the 7:10 Paddington train to Swansea, he had to leave at least one hour before. He had until five o'clock in the morning for his cogitations. He was pretty certain that Jonathan's men were most probably watching him, as they appeared to have done before. He was under no illusion that they would probably silence him if needs be.

Then suddenly he thought of another strategy. Suppose he gave himself up to the police. What kind of a story would he tell them about Jonathan Crown? Would they believe him or simply laugh at him. The odds were high that he would be charged with the murder of Twoface and the motive was strong enough to get him imprisoned. Few people knew him in England; his partner Reddy had not come forward to swear to his identity. His own wife had declared him as phoney. Maybe Melanie would be supportive to his cause and be a more suitable helper? Bono was an ordinary sort of fellow, no braver than other people were, but he hated being made a fool of by a man who just happened to look like him.

Until he could prove to the police his identity, he needed to keep out of sight. Put another way, vanish and keep vanishing until he was ready to put himself at the mercy of the police once again and this time with cast iron proof of who he is.

Knowing something about Bo Greene was useful, but he wished to Heaven he knew more and Jonathan said he did. There was always a risk that he would not be able to persuade the police to accept his story with whatever proof he could come up with, but that was a chance he had to take and hope that something might happen which would confirm his tale in the eyes of the law. Meanwhile, his intention was to avoid capture. Twenty-two hours had passed since his nightmare had begun; he needed solid evidence before he could put his trust again in the police. Until that time came, he needed to trust in his belief that in the end the good always triumph. He was

very aware that there were two sets of people looking for him—Jonathan's henchmen, and the police—who wanted him for the apparent strangulation of Twoface, a crime he knew he had not committed.

Bono got up at 4:00 in the morning and opened his bedroom shutters. A faint light had flooded the London sky and he could hear the sparrows chatting. After reviewing his decision of rejecting Jonathan's offer, thus losing the help of an apparently influential man, with a wry mouth he resolved to go on with his plan. He saw an old long, single-breasted tweed coat with an attached hip-length cape together with a deerstalker hat hanging in the wardrobe and decided to put them on. He checked his wallet and discovered he had a fair sum of money, which he had taken out of the ATM when he was at Heathrow airport. In the bedside cabinet drawer he spotted a calabash pipe. After dressing himself and holding the pipe in his mouth he stood in front of the mirror and admired his new image. Now for the next step, he checked on Vinna who was in the next room and found she was sound asleep. He crept stealthily downstairs, scribbled a thank you message on a piece of paper, and placed it on the coffee table. He went into the darkened smoking-room where the rays of morning light were beginning to creep through the shutters. There he swallowed a cup of tea and some biscuits from the cupboard. By this time it was nearly five o'clock. He removed his pipe from his pocket and stuffed it with tobacco. He peeped through Vinna's bedroom again and saw her resting peacefully. 'Goodbye, friend,' he whispered; 'I'm going to help myself. Wish me well, and thank you for rescuing me.' Then he left through the back door. That was the worst part of this business, for he was fairly choking to get out of doors. He walked hurriedly through an alleyway, not expecting to see anyone at that hour, when he caught sight of the milkman a hundred yards down. Impulse made him turn his head and raise his eyes to the house he had left and there at the first-floor window was a face. He waved and Vinna waved back. He crossed the street, took the first side street and went up a left-hand turning leading past a bit of a vacant ground. At that moment, the clock of a neighbouring church struck the hour of five. There wasn't a second to spare. As soon as he got to Station Road he ran. The clock at Swansley Station showed eight minutes past six. At the station there was no time to take a ticket. A porter told him the platform and as he entered it he saw the train already in motion. Two station officials blocked his way, but he dodged them and climbed into the last carriage. Three minutes later, as the train was racing through the tunnel, an irate guard came through the rubber doors and interviewed him. He issued him a ticket to Victoria Station and escorted him from the first-class compartment where he was to a third-class smoker, occupied by a dishevelled man and a large woman with a child. He avoided going to the restaurant car as he still had a few biscuits which he had taken from Vinna's cupboard and shared one with the fat woman's child.

In the rack, he spotted a copy of a morning paper, with news about the forthcoming election and the beginning of the snooker season and some paragraphs about the Lewinski affair. However, on page six there was a picture of Bo Greene and next to it was his own with one column of text. He studied the article. It was pretty well filled with suggestions, chiefly allegations. The police were clearly on the case. Now he was certain that he was on a wanted list.

No one in the carriage appeared to have recognised him, which meant his disguise was holding good. He relaxed and closed his eyes but opened them again when the train had stopped at Bromley South station to let in more passengers.

There was a man sitting two rows along, facing him whose looks he didn't like. He kept glancing at Bono, which made him wonder if he'd been recognised. When he caught sight of himself in the windows of a passing train, wearing his tweed gear, hat and pipe he suddenly realised he was the very image of Sherlock Holmes. The train rumbled gently past open land and a range of houses. At exactly six thirty-five the train entered Victoria Station. Conscious that he was a wanted man he needed to tread carefully to avoid capture.

As he got out of the train, he filed himself among the other passengers as they moved forward. At the gate, the guard looked at him and compared what he saw with the picture he had on his board. After a lengthy stare, he opened the gate and let him through. That had been one of the most scary moments of the trip so far. He took the underground and sixteen minutes later he was at Paddington train station. He approached the booking-office and took a ticket to Swansea. Suddenly there was an announcement:

Platform 8, for the 07:10 Great Western Railway service to Swansea calling at: Reading, Swindon, Bristol Parkway, Newport, Cardiff Central, Bridgend, Port Talbot Parkway, Neath and Swansea. This train comprises of 10 coaches. Change at Newport for services to Abergavenny and Hereford. Change at Swansea for services to Llanelli, Pembrey and Burry Port, Carmarthen, Whitland and Fishguard Harbour.

*An at-seat service of light refreshments is available on the train.
First class is at the middle and front of the train.*

Bono boarded the train. The only occupants of the carriage he had chosen was an old farmer and his dog—a pit-bull that he mistrusted. The man was asleep and on the cushion beside him was the South Wales Daily Post. Eagerly he seized on it, for he was curious if it would tell him something. There were two columns about the trial of the Crossbow victim's home, which had been used to grow cannabis. Another column was about the Tony Gilbert Strangler, as he was called. Poor Twoface; *did his good turn earn him his death or was he going to be sacrificed anyway by the mystery caller who threatened him on the phone?* Either way for Bono it was sad news. He hoped that the police would eventually discover who truly murdered him. He read that the police were reticent about who they thought had committed the murder and were of the opinion that he had got away from London by rail. There was a short note about Bono whom they were convinced was Bo Greene and was the man responsible for Twoface's death. Bono needed no further evidence that he had become the enemy of the state. There was nothing else of importance in the paper, nothing about the real Bo Greene who was still camping in Bono Spencer's home, the thing that was of interest to him. He lay it down and found that the train was approaching Reading station. Standing on the platform were two men, who he guessed were Jonathan's henchmen that had tagged him. Sitting well back in the shadows, he watched them carefully as the train came to a standstill. They made no attempt to board the train. As it moved away from that station the farmer woke up. He gazed at Bono with a wandering glance, kicked his dog viciously and inquired where he was. Clearly he was very drunk. He swung his heels up on the seat and burrowed his drowsy head into the cushions whilst sleep once more laid its heavy hand on him.

Bono was having second thoughts. He wanted to change direction by getting out at the next station, but as it came to a standstill at Swindon Station he stood up and was about to open the door, when the infernal dog, under the impression that he was decamping with its master's belongings, started to bark and got him by the

trousers. The commotion woke the old farmer. 'Don't be frightened, he's all bark and no bite,' he mumbled and then went back to sleep whilst the train started again and sped away.

At one o'clock, the train was finally at Swansea station. Happily, the man and his dog, which was attached by a rope to his waist, got out of the carriage and seconds later the dog bit somebody. Due to the ensuing commotion, Bono was able to leave the train and walk away to the exit without being questioned. Oddly enough, the dog had frightened him more than being hunted by the police and Jonathan's henchmen. With eyes like a hawk, Bono scanned the area but could not see Melanie. He began to wonder if Melanie had changed her mind and had stood him up or if her husband had put his foot down and stopped her from leaving the house. Whilst mulling over the possibilities, he turned to his right and saw a woman standing by a pillar—dressed in green and wearing sunglasses. Bono walked towards her and when he was at arms length, he greeted her.

'Hello,' Bono said.

The woman removed her sunglasses and gave him a hostile look.

'Sorry, I thought you were someone else,' said Bono apologetically and walked away sheepishly.

For a moment, he could not believe the woman was not Melanie, as she had looked just like her. He did his best to quash a laugh as the thought that he had met Melanie's double crossed his mind. Just as he was about to give up and take the train back to London, he heard a voice calling his name. Bono turned around immediately. When their eyes met, the expression on Bono's face turned to one of contentment and relief. Melanie looked so fresh and ravishing. They hugged each other like old lovers. As they let each other go, Bono looked towards the car park and was dismayed. Standing in the distance, he saw the same two men he had seen on the platform at Reading station that had set his pulses racing ... further down a black Sedan was waiting. He was certain that the Sedan belonged to Jonathan and that his henchmen were on his tail. For the first time in his life, he wished there was a police officer about, although he knew that would have been just as bad. For a moment or two, he stared at the black car. The two men got in it and drove away. The idea that there were enemies surrounding him made him think that it would have been wiser for him to have accepted Jonathan's offer. By involving Melanie, he wondered if he had endangered not only his life but hers too. He followed Melanie to her car.

It was a long tiresome morning travelling to Swansea, three hours and twenty minutes to be exact. The poor weather had made it even harder. Bono wondered what sins he had committed when he was a free man to find himself in such a pickle.

Meanwhile, back in London, when Jonathan Crown had not received a response from Bono, he concluded that he had turned his offer down and swiftly summoned Bo Greene. Within the hour, the pair were sitting in his study sharing a glass of whisky.

'How are you enjoying life with your new wife my friend?' Jonathan asked with a curious grin.

'Great. Adelina has been very good. She really thinks I'm her husband!'

'At least one thing is going according to plan. I guess all the time you've spent studying and practising to act and talk like Bono Spencer has paid off.'

‘You can say that again, boss.’

‘Now we need to put Plan B in action.’

‘Oh, what happened to Plan A?’

‘It looks like Bono has rejected the assignment.’

‘What makes you think that?’

‘I gave him until this morning to respond and my sources tell me he has gone on the run. He was seen today catching the 07:10 to Swansea.’

‘Why Swansea?’

‘I believe he has an ex-girlfriend living there. I’m looking into it.’

‘Quite an unfortunate setback, what are we going to do?’

‘Two of my men are tailing him and keeping me posted.’

‘Tell me about this brilliant Plan B.’

‘You’ll have to do the job,’ Jonathan said, which suddenly killed the excitement that was evident on Bo’s face.

‘What? That was never part of our agreement,’ he argued.

‘It is now.’

‘Instead of shielding me from the cops you’re putting me back into their hands,’ Bo complained. ‘All you said I would have to do was to fool Adelina into believing that I was her husband and then steal the picture of Whistler’s mother, which I have done.’

Jonathan got off his seat and pointed his finger at Bo. ‘Look here stupid, if it wasn’t for me, you’d still be locked up in that so called secure unit. That’s why you owe me! Don’t you forget that, you understand?’

‘But boss...’

Jonathan was quick to cut in. ‘There is no but.’

Bo remained silent and stone-faced.

‘Thank you for bringing me the painting of Whistler’s mother. Now do me this little job, then, you can be out of this country enjoying full freedom... I’ve already arranged everything. There is nothing for you to worry about,’ Jonathan said reassuringly. ‘Once you have taken care of Lady Longfellow, I’ll make sure all of the evidence points to Bo Greene. Since the authorities think you’re Bono Spencer and he is you, they’ll automatically go after him, leaving you in the clear... Your only worry will be to figure out how to spend all of the money I’ll be paying you!’

In a more conciliatory voice Bo said, ‘Look I expect to start a new life somewhere in the sun... perhaps in the Bahamas with my newly-acquired wife of course!’

‘Oh yes, you and Adelina would make a lovely couple,’ Jonathan said with a touch of sarcasm in his voice.

‘Talking about money, now that I have to take a greater risk, how about doubling my fee to one million?’

Jonathan shook his head. ‘Getting greedy I see.’ After a moment of reflection, ‘but you are right. To show you how you can depend on me to be on your side, I’ll double your money and I’ll even give you half of it upfront.’

That put a cheer on Bo’s face immediately. Jonathan immediately opened a cabinet, pulled out a briefcase and said, ‘Here. Don’t go and spend it all at once!’

Bo’s eyes grew wider as he opened the case and saw all the loot. He picked up a bundle of notes and started to count the money when Jonathan cut in, ‘it’s all there, trust me.’

Bo smiled and immediately closed the briefcase.

‘As you know Lady Longfellow is well-guarded, however for reasons beyond

comprehension, recently on Thursdays the security has been extremely sloppy. We need to capitalise on that. About six months ago, she secretly started to meet her tennis coach/lover in Kensington Tower building, Level 6, Apartment 2b. She always parks her car in Bay 8, which is a reserved space. Accompanied by one bodyguard she takes the lift to Level 6. Then she walks alone to the end of the corridor, takes a right turn and two doors on the right is Apartment 2b. Access to it is by face-recognition. According to my sources the detector can be fooled.'

Jonathan walked purposely to his desk, picked up a folder and held it up. 'Inside this folder,' he said, 'you'll find all the information, photos; including instructions on how to cheat the detector... Your task is to switch her off for good.'

Bo examined the contents of the folder and then stood up saying, 'I'll handle this my way, no interference from you.'

'Agreed.'

'I'm going to need a gun with a silencer... can you supply me with one?'

Jonathan pulled a card from his pocket and handed it to Bo. 'Go and see Joe. He's the man to talk to; he will provide any arms and ammunition you require. By the way, this is the last time you and I will meet here this way. We need to be very cautious, you understand.'

'Whatever you say, boss.'

'It's almost 11 o'clock in the morning. You'd better get going now.'

Bo Greene finished his drink and left.

While Bo was walking home, he passed **Cordelia** going the opposite way. She stopped and glanced back, and immediately asked her companion to wait a minute whilst she rushed to Bo and accosted him.

'Hello Bono,' Cordelia said. 'Don't tell me you've forgotten me so soon?'

Bo Greene, having never set eyes on her before, had no clue who the woman, was. 'Look, you must be mistaking me for someone else.'

'I made a mistake alright, the day I slept with you,' Cordelia said, poking him in the chest.

Bo Greene suddenly realised that Cordelia must be confusing him with Bono Spencer and immediately shifted his position. He threw a quick glance at the man Cordelia was with and said, 'Keep your voice down; you surely don't want your boyfriend to hear us.'

'He is no boyfriend. It's you, I want. Otherwise, I'll tell the police you raped me. Got it?'

It was a problem Bo did not need and to shake Cordelia off him he said, 'Okay we need to talk.'

'Very wise. Come to my flat.'

'What, now?'

'No, this evening at 7:00 P.M.,' she said, 'and don't be late,' she added as she started to move away.

Bo had no idea where Cordelia lived. He couldn't exactly ask for her address so he quickly came up with a clever line. 'What if the neighbours see me?'

'Who cares...here's a spare key; do let yourself in, if I haven't arrived back from the movie.'

Bo looked at the tag linked to the key and found it had an address and a telephone number printed on it. He dropped the key in his coat pocket and continued

on his way. When he got home, he found Adelina sitting on the sofa in the lounge. She was steadying her nerves with a glass of red wine. He grabbed a seat next to her.

‘That’s a nice briefcase. I’ve never seen you with it before have I?’

Bo picked it up, placed it on her lap and asked her to open it. As she did so she shouted, ‘Wow! Have you won the lottery?’

Bo replied with a smirk on his face, ‘You can say that.’

‘Now that you’re in the money, how are you going to spend it?’

‘Actually my dear wife we are in the money, stressing the word *we*. Pack your bags. I’m taking you on the holiday of a life time.’

Adelina got up, planted a small kiss on Bo’s lips by way of saying thank you for his generous words and moved away immediately. After switching her mood she asked, ‘who are you?’

Taken slightly aback, Bo asked, ‘What kind of stupid question is that?’

‘You can stop with the act...’

‘I thought I was doing so well.’

‘Oh, you really had me fooled... until last night.’

‘Don’t tell me, the sex gave me away? Didn’t I perform well?’

‘Too well... you gave yourself away when you walked to the bathroom in your birthday suit.’

‘Shit... my birthmark... that’s what gave me away, wasn’t it?’

Adelina raising her eyebrows, nodded.

‘I always thought that would be my undoing. Why didn’t you keep quiet and go to the police?’

‘I was going to, but when I saw all that money...’

‘It figures... the lady likes money!’

‘Who doesn’t? I won’t be greedy though, I just want half. Have we got an agreement?’

‘You drive a hard bargain lady. But you know what?’

‘What?’

‘If you had played along we could have enjoyed all the money plus more together.’

‘I didn’t catch the name?’

‘Bo Greene.’

‘Well Mr Bo Greene,’ Adelina said with gritted teeth, ‘guys like you never stick around. You take what you want then disappear.’

‘Your experience of men must have been very poor! Although you would like to think you know me, you don’t.’

‘Why are you impersonating my husband?’

‘You wouldn’t understand.’

‘Try me.’

Bo Greene quickly invented a tale. ‘I had seen you with your husband before and someone told me that I couldn’t pass myself off as him. As I needed a way of confusing the police long enough for me to disappear and I also like a challenge, I took the bet.’

‘And the money in the briefcase is the wager?’

‘You got it.’

‘When were you going to leave me?’

‘Actually it was genuinely in my desire to take you with me and I still want to. I believe if you give us a chance, it would be a long rewarding relationship.’

‘What about my husband?’

‘What about your husband! I guess the police will eventually work it out that he is really Bono Spencer and he will be freed, as for us by Friday we would be long gone enjoying life in the sun.’

‘Friday, that’s the day after tomorrow?’

‘So, is there a problem?’

‘It’s my fitness lesson.’

‘Skip it. By then we’ll have so much money I’ll buy you your own gym.’

Adelina filled her glass and took a mouthful. She considered what Bo had just told her and began to question the state of her marriage. She bit her lip thinking of the plans she had been building up recently whilst her husband was away. She had ideas—not big ones, but good enough for her and she had figured out all kinds of ways to enjoy herself. Married life was a sort of Arabian Nights to her and she counted on enjoying it for the rest of her days, but from the first day she was married she was disappointed with it. In about a week, she was tired of staying at home, and less than a month ago, she’d had enough of her boring life. She had only one real pal to go out with, which was not enough for her. Plenty of people invited her to their houses; unfortunately, they didn’t seem much interested in her. Here she was, thirty-seven years old about to have enough money to have a good time and she was ready to roam. That afternoon had exercised her mind. Drinking more and more wine whilst scanning through a travel brochure she saw what was on offer.. She quite fancied lazing on a sunny beach somewhere. The question was whether she did it on her own, or she took up Bo’s offer and enjoyed a new life with him. By all accounts, he seemed the one big man in the show and he appeared to be playing it straight. *But why did he want to confuse the police?* She wondered. However, she was so blinded by the money she was too focused on the future to worry about the past. The only thing in the forefront of her mind was to brighten her life and the money would certainly help her to do that. By six o’clock, she had made up her mind and shared her thoughts with Bo. They shared a passionate kiss and ended up in bed. Thirty minutes later, remembering he had an appointment to keep, he made an excuse, dressed himself and went on his way. ✍

CHAPTER 4 *A bit on the side*

The Hampshire house was an imposing complex consisting of a large Edwardian building, three smaller annexes, with spacious, well-tended grounds and a fairly large, manicured playing field. Standing in front of the entrance, Bo thought, 'this was the best residential building in London. It must cost a lot to buy or rent an apartment here, but if you earnt enough cash why not? *After all what's the point of having money and then depriving yourself of what your heart desires?* As he prepared to enter the building, he knew he had to handle Cordelia with care. One mis-spoken word could bring him down like a house of cards. Over the years, Bo had learnt that a woman can be very troublesome when she chose to be. After locating the flat number, he rang the bell and when no one answered he used the key Cordelia had given him to get in. After putting the light on, he could clearly see that the lounge was quite spacious and tastefully furnished. He walked to a sideboard and picked up a framed photo of Cordelia. He was impressed by how beautiful she looked in her floral dress and pearl earrings. Just in the left-hand bottom corner were the following words: *To my lovely Cordelia. Love Bono Spencer.* As Bo was admiring the picture, he heard someone trying to come in. He quickly put the picture down and turned to face the door. Standing there as the door opened was Cordelia. She walked purposely towards him.

'I know how difficult it must have been to get away from your wife at this time of night, honey, but I hope you aren't in any hurry to get home –'

Cordelia nestled against him.

'No I have all the time you want. My wife can wait. I've missed you lots.'

Cordelia grinned. 'Don't lie; you didn't even notice me when I passed you earlier on.'

'That was because my mind was elsewhere.'

'You see what I mean?'

They smiled at each other. Bo pretended to be pleased. Cordelia led Bo into the bedroom. 'I'll be glad when you leave your wife and we can be together all the time,' Cordelia said. 'I have a need to nest. Every woman does –!'

'Why don't we stop talking?' Bo suggested. 'I know why you wanted me here.'

Cordelia took him in her arms. 'I'm sure you do.' She put her arms round his neck and planted a kiss. He reached behind her and curved his hands around her hips, stroking her softly and gently. He started to undress her.

'Do you know you have great thighs, sweetie?'

'All the guys tell me that,' Cordelia said. 'I'm the talk of the town. Are you planning to undress me?'

'Can I?'

Cordelia lifted her hands and started to unbutton his shirt.

‘Do you know you’re so sexy?’

She smiled. ‘Am I?’

By the time Cordelia had finished undressing, Bo was in bed waiting for her. They coupled for half an hour. He was a wonderful lover, sensual and caring. Suddenly Cordelia detached herself from Bo.

‘Who are you?’ she enquired looking earnest.

‘What you mean?’

‘You never had a birthmark.’

‘Okay you’ve found me out.’ He got up and dressed himself.

‘You really know how to make love to a woman. I must give you that. What’s your name?’

‘Bo Greene,’ Bo said seeing no need to lie.

Cordelia gave Bo a thorough look over and said, ‘You really fooled me with that look of yours.’ After a pause, ‘The paper said you strangled a nurse to death, did you?’

‘No, it’s the other guy Bono Spencer, who did it,’ he lied.

‘Why are the police saying it’s you?’

‘Because they think the other guy is me.’

‘And you are him?’

Bo nodded, ‘Just like you did.’

‘His wife must really be dumb.’

‘Why?’

‘With one kiss I found out you were not whom I thought you were and by the time we’d made love I was certain. You’ve made love to his wife, haven’t you?’

Bo didn’t answer.

‘Of course you did,’ Cordelia concluded from looking at the expression on his face.

‘Hello?’ Her voice changed. ‘No, it’s all right ... go ahead ... of course ... I’m sure I can do that. Don’t be long.’ She clicked the phone off.

‘Who was that, if I may ask?’

Cordelia hesitated before answering, ‘No one important.’

He looked at Cordelia and said, ‘I’d better go.’

He picked up his coat but Cordelia grabbed his arm and begged him to stay a bit longer.

‘I’m afraid it’s time for Cinderella to turn into a pumpkin, my dear.’

‘Give me a moment and I’ll take you home in my carriage.’

Bo suspecting she was playing for time, refused her offer and left in a hurry. No sooner than he was out of the building, his cell phone rang. He picked up the phone. It was **Joe**, one of Jonathan’s henchmen.

‘Hello?’

‘Yes, she knows who I am... she just took a phone call... no idea from whom...are you sure?’

The conversation went on for five minutes. ‘Right ... we’ll take care of it.’

‘What do you mean?’ The phone clicked off.

By the time he got home, Adelina was glued in front of the TV watching a news flash. He looked at the screen and could see there were a group of people in the street watching the commotion by Hampshire house.

‘What happened?’

‘Poor woman.’

‘What woman?’

‘The newscaster said, a woman by the name of Cordelia has fallen from the window of her flat.’

‘Is she dead?’

‘Don’t be bloody stupid, of course she is.’ After a pause, ‘a certain inspector CJ Fairfield has issued a statement saying that she was pushed. Anyway where have you been?’

‘Nowhere special.’

‘Let’s go to bed.’

‘You go, I’ll join you in a moment.’

No sooner had Adelina gone upstairs Bo telephoned Jonathan Crown on his private line.

‘Mr Crown, did your boys have anything to do with the killing of that girl?’

‘When we saw her talking to you we checked her out and luckily we had her telephone line tapped. The police were coming for you, hence, we had to act quickly before she could grass on you. Believe me she would have.’

‘Mr Crown, have you been tagging me?’

‘I always protect my interest; you of all people should know that. Now get off this line, you’ve got a job to do... err... unless you do need me – I mean *really need me*.’

‘Yes boss.’ Bo cut off.

When Jonathan Crown had finished talking to Bo, he summoned his chief bodyguard and told him, ‘Nasty, I have a feeling that Bo could renege on his obligation and cause trouble. I want you to maintain surveillance on him and keep me in the loop.’

‘You got it.’

Jonathan watched his loyal bodyguard, Nasty, in whom he had total confidence leave the room.

The Metropolitan police Commissioner was getting concerned that the murders had started to stack up and so was the Mayor. They agreed there was only one thing to do. That was to call on one of the best detectives for help.

Ten minutes later Detective Inspector CJ Fairfield entered the corridor of a huge red brick building. He walked past a guard who looked at him and offered a forced smile. CJ responded in a similar manner and made his way to the fourth floor.

The Commissioner's office was a huge, respectful looking room but in need of a makeover. There were two men seated in the office.

As CJ entered, they both looked up. The Commissioner was the older man of the two. Despite being only fifty, he looked like he was in his sixties. He was short and compact, with fluffy gray hair, a pale, round face, and restless brown eyes. He had a sharp accent. He was wearing a well-pressed checked-suit and shiny black shoes. He indicated the second man.

‘This is the Mayor, **Steven Lockwood.**’

Steven smiled. ‘How do you do, Mr Fairfield?’

Steven Lockwood looked totally unlike the Commissioner. He appeared to be about ten years younger. He had a curved nose and a firm chin. He was dressed in a light blue Steve Laurent suit with a gray checked tie. He had almost no accent at all.

‘I’ve heard a lot of excellent things about you Mr Fairfield,’ Steven Lockwood said.

‘Thank you, sir.’

‘Sit down CJ,’ said the Commissioner.

The Commissioner leaned back in his chair. ‘Let me get straight to the point and I hate to admit this, but just between us three, I’m afraid this city is becoming too dangerous to live in.’ He sighed. ‘To be perfectly honest CJ, I’ve no idea what’s going to happen here next, but whatever trouble is on its way I want to prevent it from happening. This has been a city with an excellent record in attacking crimes and keeping the level to the minimum as much as possible. Watching the numbers going up worries me a lot and I will be damned if I’m going to allow these criminals to run this city.’

‘As you probably already know there is a case of doppelganger which in my opinion has been mis-handled. I want you to take charge and bring a resolution to the whole affair.’

‘I’ll do my best sir.’

Steve Lockwood spoke. ‘Oh we want more than your best Mr Fairfield. Only results will do.’

CJ looked at him. ‘Understood, sir.’

The Commissioner was optimistic that he would get the results he desired from CJ who have solved many cases, but the Mayor was yet to be convinced.

Five minutes later, when CJ got back to his office he was speaking to Karina, his assistant/wife. They were alone in a small room with the door closed planning their strategy. A maid came in carrying a tray of tea, biscuits and croissants. Karina poured the tea.

They resumed their discussion. ✍

CHAPTER 5 *...Help of an old flame*

In Swansea, sitting in the car next to Melanie, Bono was very grateful his ex-girlfriend had been willing to meet with him even though he was the one who had broken off their relationship.

‘Melanie,’ Bono said softly. ‘It’s wonderful to see you again.’

‘Same here,’ said Melanie as she looked into his blue mesmerizing eyes. ‘It’s been a long time... so many times I wanted to call you.’

‘Why didn’t you?’

‘Oh! I didn’t think you would want to talk to me.’

‘I’m surprised your husband has allowed you to come and meet me.’

‘Graham did try to stop me, but don’t hold this against him, you would probably have attempted to do the same... we’d better get going as he will be wondering what is taking me so long.’

Melanie started the car. ‘I’ve been reading about you in the papers.’

‘I figured you would.’

‘I was told everyone has a double, but I never quite believed it until now. Tell me a bit about this other guy.’

‘There’s nothing much to tell, other than he looks exactly like me and his name is Bo Greene, pretending to be me.’

‘So you didn’t strangle that nurse?’

‘Noooo. However, since the police think I’m Bo Greene they’re looking for me... Look Melanie, I want you to know that breaking up with you was one of my biggest mistakes... I wanted to play the field, but I’ve regretted it ever since.’

‘You don’t have to tell me that...’

‘But it’s true... we were young and I was stupid. It’s too bad one only becomes wise after the fact.’

‘What’s happened, happened! Let’s not dwell on the past.’

‘But it was important for me to tell you. So if you don’t want to help me, I’ll understand.’

‘I want to help you. Just tell me how.’

‘Look, this man is living in my house with my wife. The police think he is Bono Spencer and there’s nothing I can do to prove he isn’t. I want you to come with me to the police and tell them they’ve got it wrong.’

‘What about your wife, surely she is better placed than me to vouch for you?’

‘She would be, but I think she is part of the scam.’

‘What makes you think they would believe me?’

‘There is no one else I can turn to...’ Bono said but suddenly realised that he was probably asking for too much and told Melanie to stop the car.

‘Why?’

‘It’s no good me coming back into your life like that and expecting you to help me especially after I jilted you.’

‘It’s true, I felt very hurt when you did that, especially after I’d always been faithful to you...but as you said you were young and foolish. I got over it, didn’t I? So to speak.’

Seconds later Melanie turned into her driveway in Cockett Avenue and stopped by her front door. The former noticed a *Bed and Breakfast* sign on display in the front window.

‘You live here?’

She nodded. ‘Graham and I bought it after we’ve got married.’

‘Very nice.’

Once they were inside, Bono shook hands with Graham but the latter was not very keen to be friendly until Melanie quietly reprimanded him. Melanie served them each a glass of beer and picked up a soda for herself before they sat together and continued to chat.

‘It’s hard to believe the stuff I’ve been reading in the newspaper,’ said Graham. ‘It was like reading a fictional novel.’

‘You’d better believe it.’

‘Surely your wife can’t be fooled that easily?’

‘You would have thought so,’ Melanie intervened. ‘Bono thinks there is a conspiracy going on and she is involved.’

Graham leaned forward. ‘What about your office partner, is she mixed up in this plot too?’

‘I don’t know,’ Bono said. ‘She’s conveniently disappeared.’

‘Then she is involved in it,’ Graham remarked and questioned further. ‘Why would your wife allow herself to be mixed up in this? Was your marriage in trouble?’

‘If it was I had no clue. But she certainly didn’t stand up for me when I was trying to persuade the police that I’m Bono Spencer.’

‘So, tell me,’ Graham said as he leaned forward, ‘this imposter, has he got a name?’

Melanie cut in. ‘His name is Bo Greene.’

‘...but thanks to an ill-informed nurse,’ Bono added, ‘the police believe I am Bo Greene and he is Bono Spencer.’

Graham shaking his head uttered, ‘Incredible.’

Melanie cut in again. ‘Incredible it may be to you, but you’d better believe it, Graham. I for one do believe Bono’s story and I’m going to do whatever I can to help him and you’d better help too or else...’

‘...but how?’ Graham asked sitting straight.

‘We can go to the police and vouch for him, that’s how,’ Melanie said firmly. ‘I’m sure some of my friends will join in on my crusade.’ Then turning to Bono, ‘We can start by questioning why they haven’t checked your finger prints or DNA.’

‘Yes, why haven’t they?’ Graham wanted to know.

‘The police have ruled that out as unnecessary probably because I have no recordable offences.’

Melanie, thinking aloud said, ‘There must be other proof; how about *dental records, a scar of some kind...* hey when you were in Iraq you must have sustained a wound or two?’

‘No no, I was one of the lucky ones. Thinking of it now, some luck some would say!’

‘Ah! What about your signature?’

‘The police have checked that out too and found that Bo’s sample was a better match than mine.’

‘How is that possible?’ Graham shouted.

Keeping his composure Bono explained. ‘With practice anyone can copy a

signature. Unfortunately, I've never been able to reproduce my signature exactly every time and with a sore finger it has become even more difficult...unless I can find other credible evidence, I have to keep running.'

'Even if Melanie and I go to the police and vouch for you, this will not be enough,' Graham said.

'Why not?' Melanie challenged her husband.

'Because anyone can do that!'

'But not anyone can tell the police what I can. Don't forget Bono and I were lovers for a long time, before I knew you of course.'

'You mean you have some dark secrets that only you and Bono know?'

'Now who can ever say I haven't got a clever husband!' Melanie gave Graham a quick kiss.

Melanie moved to the fridge to bring more beer. She casually looked through the kitchen window and noticed two suspicious looking people standing on the pavement on the opposite side of the street. She immediately called out to Bono.

'Bono, come here quick.'

'What's up?' both men asked, as they rushed to her.

Pointing to the window she asked, 'Aren't they the same two guys we saw at the train station?'

All three of them moved to another window, Bono was the first to peep behind the curtain to have a good look and he nodded. Unexpectedly one of the people moved out of sight leaving the other to answer his mobile. Then he too moved out of sight. Seconds later, he reappeared. However, they did not attempt to come to the house.

'Are they secret policemen?' Melanie asked.

'No. They are Jonathan Crown's spies.'

'What? Who's that man?'

'I'll explain it another time,' Bono replied. 'Now I need to think.'

'What are we going to do Bono?'

'I don't know.'

Melanie had another peep and she whispered, 'One of the guys is back on the phone again.'

'Where is the other one?' Graham wanted to know.

'Watching the back door maybe.'

Bono apologised to Melanie for getting her involved and slipped his coat back on.

'Where are you going?' an anxious Melanie asked.

'I don't know, but I must get out of here.'

'How?'

'Is there any other way out of here?' Bono asked.

'Come with me,' said Melanie and she guided him to the kitchen, pulled a gun from a box hidden in a wall cabinet and said, 'take this, you never know.'

'Where did you get this?'

'Never mind that now,' she said and guided him to a wooden door hidden behind a tall freezer. With the help of Bono, she pulled the freezer forward and

opened the door.

‘Where does this lead to?’ Bono asked.

‘To the basement car park,’ Melanie replied, ‘where you will find a blue Ford belonging to Graham. Take it and when you don’t need it anymore ring and let me know where I can pick it up. Good luck!’

They managed a quick hug. ‘I’ll call you,’ said Bono, ‘and please Melanie, go to the police and vouch for me. Also see if you can locate my partner Reddy and tell her to do the same.’

Melanie nodded. ‘I promise.’

Bono then entered a poorly lit passage closing the door behind him and walked forward, cautiously negotiating his steps until he had reached another door made of steel. As luck would have it, it was locked. Using the gun Melanie had given him he busted the lock which caused a worrying loud noise. He hurriedly opened the door revealing a huge parking area with a few cars. There amongst them stood the blue Ford with a roof hatch, very spick and span, without any dents on it which suggested it had been well kept. He jumped into the driver’s seat, started the car and drove quickly out of the basement. Almost at once, the road curved and he lost sight of Melanie’s house, but the heavy rain brought the sound of angry noises. Driving at 30mph over the black-coated roads, he glanced back over his shoulder and looked anxiously for the next turning; Bono was struggling to concentrate on his driving as he kept thinking about what situation he had left Melanie and Graham in. He was concerned about these two people who had been good enough to receive him and listen to his plight. All his tales about his double, his wife and the police made him angry. He had trusted his wife, whom he felt had let him down. Why, he did not know. The nineteenth day of November was going to be a day of celebration—his first wedding anniversary in fact. He was so looking forward to enjoying it that he blamed Bo Greene for preventing him from celebrating such a memorable time with his wife. If he had any reasons to hate Bo that was surely one of them, but was that enough for him to have accepted Jonathan’s offer, he was not sure. *At least Jonathan was trying to avenge the death of his wife*, he acknowledged, whilst here he was in doubt of the honesty and fidelity of his own wife. This was the thought that occupied his brain as he swerved the blue Ford from road to road. He resisted the temptation of ringing Jonathan and accepting his offer of help but that meant accepting his deal that went with it. A little reflection convinced him that that would be unwise. Proving his identity remained a tough nut for him to crack. His best hope was to show the police a sign, a token of proof, but only Heaven knew what that would be. One thing was certain, he had to keep running, ready to act when things got ripper and that was going to be no light job with the police of the United Kingdom in full cry after him not forgetting the watchers of Jonathan’s henchmen persistently on his trail. As he drove along he had no clear purpose in his journey, but he steered south, for he remembered from his past knowledge of Wales that if he went in that direction he would come into the valleys where hopefully he would find a discreet place to rest. He needed to hurry before the night caught up with him.

Half-way down was a petrol station which prompted him to look at the fuel tank gauge on the dashboard and notice he was nearly out of gasoline. As Bono turned into the filling station, next to a pump he saw a black car. One of its occupants was using the pump whilst the other was looking in his direction. As Bono pulled in, a man walked towards him with raised hands. Bono was nearly foolish enough to obey when he noticed that car was in fact a black Sedan. Realisation hit him that the noise

of the gun must have alerted his pursuers, who in turn must have forced Melanie and Graham, to give them the description of the car they had loaned him. He released the brakes just in time. As it was, one of the men made a claw at the hood and only dropped off when he felt Bono's right hook hitting his eye.

Bono realised that the main roads were no place for him and turned into the byways. It was not an easy job without a map to guide him, for there was the risk of getting on to a farm road and ending up in a duck-pond or a stable-yard and he couldn't afford that kind of diversion. He began to see what an ass he had been to continue driving the car. The blue Ford was the greatest give away. If he had ditched it sooner and taken to his feet, he would have been less conspicuous. The immediate thing to do was to get to the loneliest roads. These he soon found when he was crossing over a broad river and got into a valley with steep hills all around him and a corkscrew road at the end, which climbed over a pass. Here he met nobody, but it was taking him too far north, so he steered east along a bad track and finally struck a big double-line railway. Away below him, he saw another broad valley and it occurred to him that if he crossed it he might find some remote inn to pass the night at.

He drove for miles with fields on both sides when he saw little old thatched houses and gardens blazing with hawthorn and yellow laburnum. The area was so peaceful that he could scarcely believe that somewhere behind him were those who sought his life and unless he had the almightiest of luck, at worst he would be seized by Jonathan's men and killed or at best captured and thrown into jail by those who purported to uphold the law.

About four o'clock he entered a long, winding village and as the afternoon was drawing to an end, he realised he was ravenous, as he hadn't eaten anything since he'd left Melanie's B&B except for couple of buns and two large beers. Just then he heard a noise in the sky and low and behold there was a helicopter, flying low, about a dozen miles to the south and rapidly coming towards him. He was clever enough to remember that on a large uncultivated treeless stretch of land covered with large ferns, low-growing evergreen plants and coarse grasses he was at the helicopter's mercy, and that his only chance was to get to the leafy cover of the valley. Down the hill he drove as fast as he could, turning his head round, whenever he could, to watch the damned flying machine. Soon he was on a road between hedges and dipping into the deep-cut valley of a stream. Then the road became rough and bendy forcing him to slow down. But out of the blue, on his right another car was hooting him. In an attempt to let the impatient bastard past, he pulled as far left as he could. To his horror he was confronted with a post. He slammed on his brake, but his thrust was too hard and his car started to slide crossways. To avoid hitting the other car, he steered left into the hedge trusting that this would bring his car to an instant halt. Alas! he was mistaken. His car glided through the hedge and then took a sickening plunge forward. Seeing the precipice he was falling into, he leapt onto the seat and before he could jump out a branch of hawthorn got him in the chest, lifted him up and held him, whilst the blue Ford slipped below him, he jumped and slanted, as it dropped sixty feet to the bed of the cliff. Slowly, he detached himself from the thorn bush and scrambled to his feet when a strong hand took him by the arm and in a sympathetic voice told him how lucky he was. He found himself standing next to a biker in leather gear and a helmet who kept wishing him a long life. Whilst he was glad he was still alive, he hoped Graham would understand when he got round to telling him that his cherished blue Ford was no more.

'If you would like to come with me, Sir, my house is not far. There you will be provided with fresh clothes, a decent meal and a warm bed.'

‘That’s awfully nice of you, I’m Bono Spencer.’

The man extended his right hand. ‘**Jack Jones**, but you can call me Jack.’ They shook hands.

‘Is this your first time passing through here?’

‘Yes,’ said Bono.

‘Very treacherous road, didn’t you see the warning sign?’

‘I did but... oh never mind.’

Jack patted Bono’s shoulder and hurried him to the back of his motor cycle. Five minutes later, they arrived at a comfortable-looking bungalow surrounded by hedges with a low gate and Bono was ushered indoors. Jack took Bono first to a wardrobe and asked him to choose something. He picked a pair of jeans and a cotton shirt, which differed most conspicuously from his former garments. Then he was shown the shower where he was provided with a towel and soap. When he was dressed, Jack guided him to the lounge, where they shared a snack and a warm cup of tea.

‘My wife has gone to see her parents and won’t be back until tomorrow evening, so we have the house for ourselves... err what about you? Have you got a lady to keep you warm at night?’

‘Erm... yes.’

‘You know your face somehow looks familiar. Are you an actor of some kind? If not you should be.’

Bono shook his head wearing a grin. ‘I’m just an ordinary art dealer living in London.’

‘Oh London, the Kent county or the garden of England as some say is near there is it not? What brought you to this neck of the woods?’

‘Just passing through.’

‘Passing through or running away?’ Jack mumbled.

‘What?’

‘You heard. Don’t worry I won’t give you away. So what’s your real name?’

‘I told you, Bono Spencer.’

‘Then why are the papers calling you Bo Greene?’

‘The police have confused me with another guy who looks just like me and who is, at this very moment, occupying my house.’

‘If that’s the case why are you on the run? Shouldn’t you be in England fighting your corner?’

‘I came to Swansea to seek help from an ex-girlfriend who could prove my identity.’

‘What about your wife, you did say you’re married, right?’

‘I think she is part of some kind of a scheme with the other guy.’

‘That’s women for you... don’t get me wrong my wife is one of the best and she wouldn’t dream of playing foul with me.’

‘You’re a fortunate man. I wish I was that lucky.’

Suddenly the house phone rang and Jack went to pick up the receiver. Turning to Bono he said it was a private call. Bono immediately offered to leave the room but Jack quickly indicated that he would go to the back room and pick up the call there.

Whilst Jack was on the phone, Bono took the opportunity to send Melanie a quick text. He asked her if she had contacted the police yet and avoided giving her the bad news about the car. He felt it was something better left for another time. Bono

was surprised when he received an instant reply.

'Hello Bono, I have been thinking of you. Yes, we've been to the local police station and I met a desk sergeant who took a deposition from Graham and myself and two of my friends who also came along. The Sergeant was very accommodating. He made us wait whilst he relayed the information to London. I don't know if you're aware, but a detective Inspector CJ Fairfield has been assigned to the case and he is coming to talk to us soon. By the way, he told us there are secret police looking for you in all four countries of the UK. Wherever you are, I hope you are safe. Keep in touch. Melanie.'

Bono noticed a newspaper on the sideboard. He grabbed it and quickly flicked through the pages. The paper was a day old and there on Page 3 was his picture, however, surprisingly the caption named him as Bo Greene. Beneath it was a short article entitled WANTED FOR MURDER. It went on to indicate there was a reward on offer for information leading to his arrest. Bono got up and as he approached the door, he overheard the end of Jack's conversation, which confirmed his suspicion that his host was not the saviour he'd originally thought. He knew he had to get out of this trap. He stealthily opened the window. It was unlocked. He jumped out and made a dash for the motor bike. On first try, he could not get the machine started. He tried again but still the bike would not start. He saw Jack coming out of the door running towards him. Just as Jack was about to jump on him, Bono succeeded in getting the engine to start and he took off leaving Jack screaming profanity whilst chasing after him in vain. ✍

CHAPTER 6 *The death of a Lady*

After riding the motorbike for half an hour or so, Bono felt it was safe enough to stop and take stock of his position. Behind him was the road climbing through a long cleft in the hills. In front was a flat space extending a fair distance, and beyond it the road fell steeply down another valley. To the left and right were round-shouldered green hills, but to the south—that is, the left hand—there was a glimpse of high mountains covered with small-flowered bushes. After a short deliberation, he rode towards it. As it was getting dark, he needed a safe place to get through the night. As he was riding along, he began to hear a sound which grew louder and louder. Suddenly he saw the helicopter that had been hounding him before, coming up from the east. Seconds later, it dropped several hundred feet and began to circle round the area in narrowing circles clearly searching for something or someone. Bono saw one of the occupants on board looking through a pair of binoculars and wondered if he had caught sight of him. Unexpectedly the helicopter began to rise and sped away. He was almost sure it was one of Jonathan's thugs trying to locate him. *But why?* He asked himself. He had done nothing to him except to refuse his offer of a dirty job. He knew he was not going to grass on Jonathan's murderous intention to the police. Of course, Jonathan had no way of knowing what Bono would or would not do. Once more for a moment, he wondered if it would have been wiser, for him, to have co-operated with Jonathan.

Although the helicopter had flown away, Bono treated it as a temporary reprieve because he couldn't be sure that anyone hadn't seen him steal the motorbike. He decided it was time to ditch it. Hence, he wheeled it a few yards and plunged it into a lake, watching it sink slowly amongst the pondweed and water-buttermilks until it was completely out of sight. Bono climbed on to a small hill to get a better view of the two valleys. He could see nowhere that he could take refuge. He tossed a coin—heads right, tails left—it landed on heads, so he turned to the north. After walking almost a mile he saw the highroad with a few moving cars. Away down the slope, some men were working. As he moved discreetly forward, he noticed a car was getting nearer, but it was still a long way off. He kept scanning and pushing his way forward hoping to find somewhere he could safely rest, which was proving difficult. There was not a stick of wood, the bog holes were little puddles and the stream was a slender trickle. There was nothing but low-growing plants, bare hills and the white highway. Then in a tiny curve of road, hidden behind a huge island, he found a cave made of stones. He approached it cautiously, hoping it was a place where he could perhaps hide and get some rest. Once inside, he found it was much bigger than it appeared from outside with several tunnels leading off in to different directions. In a corner of a wide area of the cave was a pile of dried leaves stacked together that one could use to lie on. In fact, it looked like someone or something had recently rested there. In another corner stood a cardboard box containing several pieces of bread—all of which were quite hard, like they had been there for a while. Next to the box was a terracotta pot holding cold water. Bono was sure that someone had and could still be using this cave, but he was too exhausted to think about it any further. He desperately needed to rest his tired

legs. Within seconds of him lying down, he was asleep.

It had just gone past seven o'clock when he heard heavy footsteps. To avoid detection he quickly took cover behind a rocky wall in one of the tunnels from where he had a clear view. He saw a roadman enter the cave. He wearily flung down his hammer. Bono had a sudden urge to sneeze and despite his best effort, he made a noise loud enough for the old man to hear. The latter moved towards the direction of the noise and found Bono hiding. He looked at him warily and yawned.

'Reveal yourself man, I won't harm you,' he said. Bono stepped out cautiously.

The old man went to pick up his hammer. Bono was fearful that he was going to hit him with it, but astonishingly he simply moved it out of the way, so that Bono could sit down next to him.

'Come,' he said, 'I don't have much to offer you except for some bread and fresh water.'

He was a wild figure, about Bono's own size but bent over, with a month's beard on his chin and a pair of wide spectacles.

'I'm so worn out,' he complained, 'not as strong as I used to be,' and laid his body down on the hay.

Bono asked him, 'What's the trouble?' Even though it was clear, he was exhausted.

'The trouble is that I have had a hard day trying to split a huge stone. I'm getting too old for this kind of job, but there is nothing else I can do to earn a living round here.

'Have you always lived here?' Bono asked. The old man shook his head and with a wavering finger pointed to a cottage by the stream. 'But I don't go there anymore.'

'But why?' Bono was curious to know.

'Three years ago my wife, a cheerful little treasure she was, succumbed to cancer. After that, whenever I went home I missed her presence... we had so much fun together, my little **Bernice** and me. Finally, it was no longer a joy to go home, so I decided to make my bed here ever since.'

'I'm so sorry to hear this.'

'That is life... what a rotten life it can be at times.' He discretely wiped a tear fighting to come out of the corner of his eye. 'Now I'm a slave to the Government.'

'If you let me stay the night, I'll pay you handsomely.'

Bono immediately took some notes from his wallet and placed them in his hands. He stared at Bono blankly; then, as the notion dawned on his confused brain, his face broke into a vacant smile.

'You're my saviour,' he cried. 'It'll be easily managed. I can do with some company. My name's **Elfed Evans**. I've been living here for seven years and no one has ever visited me, except my supervisor, just to pay me.'

'Passing through, are you?'

'Yeah. I lost my motorbike in a ditch further down.'

'Treacherous roads round here.'

Bono nodded in agreement.

‘What brought you this way?’ Elfed asked.

‘Oh, would you believe that if I say right this moment someone is impersonating me and has settled in my house with my wife?’

‘How could that be?’

‘The guy looks exactly like me. He talks like me, acts like me and even signs like me.’

‘What are you doing here? Shouldn’t you be out there kicking his arse out of your house?’

‘I tried that already, it didn’t work.’

‘I bet you’re going to tell me the police didn’t help.’

‘You’re right. They’re now after me for a murder I didn’t commit.’

‘There must be something you can do... look make yourself at home. I didn’t catch your name?’

‘Bono Spencer.’

‘Bono it is.’

Bono felt safe enough to spend the night with the old man. He took off his coat and rolled it into a pillow to rest his head on. Bono shut off all other thoughts and considered his current situation. He thought of the cave as his home and made his mind dwell lovingly on sleeping on a pile of hay. Soon sleep caught up with him again. ✍

CHAPTER 7 *CJ Fairfield investigates*

Day Three
Thursday, 21, November.

Being on the run, until Melanie had texted him, Bono was unaware that down at the London police station, Detective Inspector CJ Fairfield and his wife Karina had been assigned to investigate the Tony Gilbert murder case. During an interview with Dr Durant, CJ was able to gather useful information giving him a couple of leads to follow and shared half of the task with Karina. His Columbo-like approach to combating crime had gained him quite a reputation in solving some of the most brutal and cunning murders he had been involved in. There was no reason to assume he wouldn't continue to adopt this proven approach. Sitting behind his desk flicking through the file, he questioned the decision the police took not to fingerprint Bono Spencer and Bo Greene. In an interview with the press, he publicly criticised the sloppiness with which the police had handled the situation and apologised on their behalf.

Determined to solve the case, he wasted no time in making a start. At one o'clock exactly Karina arrived in the office, but CJ was nowhere to be seen. His secretary informed her that he had left the office shortly after ten. She sat at her desk going through some of the facts whilst waiting for him. She was very interested in the enquiry even though the grim and strange features, which were often associated with mis-identification and strangulation, did not surround it. Still, the nature of the case gave it a character of its own and Karina had no doubt that CJ was on top of it. Karina was a great admirer of CJ for his masterly grasp of similar situations; his incisive reasoning made it a pleasure for her to be close to him, witnessing how he disentangled the most inextricable mysteries.

The paperboy brought her the latest edition of the *London Express*. The editor had filled the front page with stories and photographs of Lady Elizabeth Longfellow. Karina looked at the photographs for a long time, her mind racing—a *fine looking woman, still in her prime, dead. Incredible!*

It was close to four in the afternoon when the office door opened and an exhausted looking CJ walked into the room, threw a second newspaper on Karina's desk and immediately disappeared into another room, whence he emerged ten minutes later, sank into his chair, baffled.

'Now about the shooting of Lady Longfellow, usually when a cheating wife is killed the husband or lover has something to do with it,' he reasoned aloud.

'But in this case we already know it was not the lover. He was at the scene of the crime, tied up and gagged,' said Karina.

'True. Unfortunately, he's in intensive care. According to the doctor, the shock was too much and he is unable to speak!' CJ pointed out.

Karina shook her head in disgust. 'I know she was caught being unfaithful, but why kill her? A divorce should be more civilized in this day and age.'

‘Some would describe it as a crime of passion.’

‘Crime of passion, my foot,’ Karina retorted. ‘I had the pleasure of meeting her once; a wonderful lady, friendly and warm too. I had a distinct feeling her marriage was not a happy one.’

CJ looked at Karina in surprise. ‘I didn’t know that. Then you’d probably also know she did a lot of charity work. Now she is gone!’

‘Err... did you get to see the man calling himself Bono Spencer?’

‘No. Apparently he had gone out early when I went to the house this morning but I had an illuminating conversation with Adelina Spencer.’

‘Really! Tell me more.’

‘Well...’

As CJ was about to reveal what he had discovered, a call came and he took it. Seconds later he told Karina, ‘let’s go.’

‘Where are we going?’

‘To look at a video footage and then to Swansea.’

‘I like Wales, why Swansea?’

‘We need to talk to a Melanie Cox, an ex-girlfriend of Bono Spencer.’

‘How did she get involved in this?’ Karina asked.

‘Apparently, she and her husband were the two last people to see Bono Spencer and they have an interesting contribution to make to this case.’

Ten minutes later CJ and Karina were in the basement of the police library where **Rosetta Lee Jones**, an attractive brown-haired woman in her thirties, was seated behind her desk cataloguing tapes. She looked up as the duo entered.

‘Hi, there, I saw the news. Such a tragedy!’

‘Sad indeed,’ Karina responded.

‘So young and beautiful,’ Rosetta said solemnly. ‘Well, I’ve got everything ready for you.’

Rosetta led them to a desk with a television monitor on it. She switched it on, the picture of a couple in bed appeared on the screen, she immediately pressed a button and the picture froze.

‘When you’re ready, just press the button again,’ she said and left.

Karina pressed the button and they started watching a ten-minute camera recording. They could clearly see the intruder entering the apartment where Lady Longfellow and her lover were engaging in lovemaking. As soon as they saw the intruder, they sat up. Lady Longfellow quickly pulled the bed sheet up to cover her front.

‘You,’ the intruder said pointing a Beretta with a silencer at the man, ‘move aside and close your eyes.’

The lover did as he was told, certain that he was going to be shot, but shifting the direction of the gun towards the woman Bo asked, ‘Are you Lady Longfellow?’ to

which the Lady nodded.

‘Naughty, naughty,’ Bo said shaking his head. ‘Does your husband know what you are up to?’

She shook her head mumbling, ‘no.’

‘Wrong. He does and has sent me to teach you a lesson.’

‘Please I’m wealthy, name your price.’

‘Your life,’ Bo said dryly as he shrugged his shoulders.

‘Nooooo. Look whatever my husband is paying you, I’ll double it.’

‘That’s the problem with you rich people, you think you can buy anyone with money...’

Tears began to run down the lady’s cheeks, looking powerless and petrified. Pointing to the bedside table, ‘Look, take my jewellery. It’s worth a lot of money plus as I’ve said, I’ll give you twice what my husband has promised you.’

Bo knew he had a job to do. Uncharacteristically he was not tempted to betray his boss by accepting the offer of being paid double. Without hesitation he pulled the trigger and then he pulled it again and then again. All three bullets landed in Lady Longfellow’s chest which exploded into a red shower as she fell back on the bed.

Satisfied he turned to the lover, who expecting to be next, tried to escape, but Bo caught up with him, tied his hands and feet and then gagged him. Before leaving, he told him that if he were to ever talk to the police about what he had seen, he would seek him out and cut his balls off.

The clip ended and the screen went black. CJ turned off the television monitor and the duo sat there for a while looking at each other in silence, before vacating their seats. What could have been a difficult case to solve had suddenly turned out to be relatively easy.

On their way out CJ thanked the librarian and looked puzzled. *Why did the murderer not bother to hide his face?* He questioned aloud. *It’s as if he wanted to be recognised!* he commented.

‘Now is he Bo Greene or Bono Spencer?’ Karina questioned.

‘That’s it,’ CJ shouted. ‘That’s the puzzle the killer has left us with.’

The duo jumped into their car and headed to South Wales, where down in the Swansea valley they hoped to find the answers they were looking for. There were more pieces of the puzzle that he needed before he could solve it!

When CJ and Karina had arrived at Melanie’s B&B, they were greeted by Melanie herself.

‘I’m Detective Inspector CJ Fairfield and this is my assistant Karina Fairfield.’

‘Are you husband and wife?’

Both CJ and Karina nodded.

‘We have received a copy of your deposition and this is a follow up visit,’ CJ said to Melanie.

‘I see. Come into the lounge where we can talk more comfortably,’ Melanie

said and opened the door wider and led the way.

Graham was already sitting down reading the paper. He got up and introduced himself.

Addressing Melanie, CJ asked, 'Have you known Bono Spencer for a long time?'

'Five years.'

'In that period of time, I imagine you got to know him well.'

'Yes, of course.'

CJ explained, 'I'm trying to get a picture of what kind of man he is. Is he —?'

Melanie interrupted. 'I can tell you exactly what kind of man he is, Inspector Fairfield. When he discovered my father had dementia, Bono Spencer helped me nurse him as if he was his own father and helped to pay all the medical bills until he died even though he was earning very little. When my mother died, he helped me pay for the funeral expenses.' Her eyes filled with tears. 'He is the most kind, generous human being I've ever known.'

'Why did you two separate,' Karina asked.

'It all happened very quickly. One morning we met and he confessed to me that he had developed the urge to play the field but he has since admitted to me when I saw him yesterday, that he has regretted his decision ever since.'

'He came here to visit you?'

'Yes Inspector. After I responded to his text message he came and against my husband's wishes I went to pick him up at Swansea train station at 01:00 P.M. and brought him to our house. We talked. When we spotted two men had followed him here, about three hours later, he left in my husband's car.'

'And he's still not returned it,' Graham complained. 'That car is my pride and joy. I hope he hasn't wrecked it.'

'Behave yourself Graham.' Melanie yelled at her husband.

'When he left here did he return to London?'

'Not at all, he told me until he could find good enough evidence to prove his identity, he had to keep vanishing and begged me to call the police and vouch for him, which I did. So did my husband and two of my friends.'

Karina intervened. 'Have you heard from him since?'

'I received a text message saying he was moving east, that's all.'

'You never told me you had received a text,' Graham protested. 'Did he tell you anything about my car?'

'No he didn't,' Melanie replied looking annoyed.

'Mrs Cox, is there anything else that you can tell us that would help us differentiate him from his double?' CJ asked.

'Yes...but I am afraid it's a little naughty.'

'Oh!' CJ displayed an embarrassing smile.

'But if it will help him, I'm prepared to tell you.' She immediately whispered the secret into CJ's ear.

CJ chuckled. 'That will certainly help. Thank you for sharing it with me.'

Once the duo had left the Coxes and were sitting in the car, Karina wanted to know what Melanie had whispered in his ear but CJ promptly touched his nose three times then started the car.

On their return to London, CJ dropped Karina at the public library and asked her to check to see if she could find any additional information on Bo Greene whilst he drove to 121, Oxford High Street where Bono shared an office with his business partner Reddy Donovan. When he got there, he found the door open, but the only person present was a short attractive Iranian woman doing the hovering. She said her name was **Fatima** but could barely speak English.

‘Mr Spencer no here, he gone away,’ and continued with her hovering.

‘I actually want to speak to Miss Reddy Donovan,’ CJ said.

The woman didn’t answer and CJ later learnt that she was partially deaf.

‘Miss Donovan, where is she?’

‘No here... gone too.’

‘When do you expect them back?’

‘Me know nothing.’

‘I’m from the police,’ CJ said.

‘Oh police...me done nothing. Me just work, work and not much pay.’

CJ could see he was not going to get much out of this woman. Before leaving, he looked around to see if he could spot anything unusual. He went upstairs and found a spacious room with ceilings and walls painted in neutral colours, which displayed some very expensive paintings.

As CJ was leaving, he told Fatima that he would be back to which she answered: Me no coming back. Me office close. Me going back home.

CJ grinned. Once he was outside the building, he took a deep breath and looked disappointed. When he got back to the police station, he found Karina waiting for him in the office and they walked together to the half-empty staff cafeteria. CJ stood in the doorway for a moment looking for a quiet area in the restaurant where they could talk and then he escorted Karina to a table.

‘How did you get on?’ They both spoke at the same time and they instantly chuckled.

‘You first,’ Karina said.

‘No, ladies first,’ said CJ.

‘Not a lot,’ said Karina. ‘Only that Bo Greene is a dangerous psychopath. When he caught his wife cheating on him, he shot the lover. Had it not been for Dr Durant, Bo would have gone to prison instead of being sent to the Tony Gilbert Unit. It’s believed the man who impersonated Jonathan Crown used his inside contacts in the secure unit to help him escape. Bo was once an amateur boxer turned bouncer. He’s known to be a rough, mean individual and very, very dangerous if he is pushed too far.’ Karina hesitated. ‘Despite giving the impression that he is sensitive and loving towards the fairer sex, I’m afraid, Bo doesn’t like married woman.’

They picked up trays and selected their food. When they sat down again, CJ said, ‘You’ve done much better than me. I talked to a foreign cleaner who could barely hear me, or converse in English. We really need to insist that people should speak the language properly before coming in to this country.’

‘Stop it. Immigrants contribute a lot to this country.’

‘I know. But at least they could learn the lingo.’

‘Well did you get to talk to Miss Donovan?’

‘Not a chance. It looks like she’s AWOL.’

‘Where’s she gone?’

‘No idea.’

‘Do you think she’s involved?’

‘Most certainly.’ CJ put down his fork. *‘No one just disappears...’* I would have expected her to be one of the first people to come forward.’ He picked up his fork again and twisted some spaghetti around it, which he delicately put in his mouth.

‘CJ, how relevant do you think Miss Donovan is to this case?’

CJ considered this for a moment. Then he shook his head. ‘On a scale of ten (ten being the highest) I would say three.’

Karina sat there finishing her meal, thinking about what she had just heard. Whilst she didn’t completely agree with CJ’s assessment, she kept her thoughts to herself.

‘What now?’ Karina asked.

‘We need to talk to anyone who knew Bono and Bo or is linked to this case in one way or another.’

‘Do you have anyone in particular in mind?’

‘Not of this moment.’

Karina left the office. ✍

CHAPTER 8 *The betrayal*

Day Four

Friday, 22 November, 12:00 P.M.

The news of Lady Longfellow's death was in most newspapers and on TV. Jonathan Crown was having lunch when the maid brought him the morning newspaper. One particular article grabbed his attention and with a triumphant grin on his face he picked up the phone and called Bo Greene.

'Yes,' Bo said faintly.

'Quite an interesting article in the Morning Post... you did a great job, Congratulations!'

'Well you've got your kind of justice at last... Erm... I'll be round later to pick up the rest of my money.'

'That's what I was ringing you about. No doubt you're in a hurry to get out of the country. Can we meet by the breaker's yard at 3.00 P.M.?''

'Let's make it two o'clock, because I need to be at the airport by half past three.'

'Okay, two o'clock then.'

'Oh by the way, what did you want me to do with the Beretta?'

'Get rid of it.'

'What? That's a cool piece; I wouldn't mind keeping it for protection.'

'You don't need any. Everything has gone perfectly. Soon you'll be out of the country living a life of luxury with that pretty Adelina. Besides, we cannot allow for any loose ends. Ditch it now.'

However, Bo was not willing to throw the gun away, at least not just yet. At exactly 2 P.M. he arrived in his brand new Mercedes SL which he had leased from his local dealer and stopped a few yards away from what he recognised as Jonathan's car. As he got closer **Wolf**, the driver of the car got out and opened the back door. Bo expected to see Jonathan Crown sitting in the back seat but when this was not the case he looked questionably at Wolf.

'Where is Mr. Crown?'

'I've been sent to take you to him,' said Wolf.

'Our agreement was he was going to meet me here.'

'Some minute business needed his urgent attention.'

An unhappy Bo accepted Wolf's explanation and got into the back seat. Wolf locked the door, but instead of returning to the driver's seat, he walked away from the car watched by Bo who immediately felt there was something fishy.

Bo shouted, 'Hey you.'

Wolf ignored his call and kept walking away to another car that had just

arrived. When Bo saw Wolf getting into that car he knew he had been set up. He shouted again this time louder.

‘Hey you,’ but his call fell on deaf ears as he watched the other car drive away.

For a moment Bo couldn’t believe what had happened and quickly realised he had been tricked. He tried to open the nearside door to get out of the car but the lock was jammed. He leaned to his left and tried the other door. It was locked as well. He thought of jumping into the front seat but was confronted with a transparent unbreakable divider. The expression on his face was that of sheer panic. He looked at the rear window and decided to put a bullet through it. The glass shattered to pieces instantly. He was so glad he never threw away the gun. He crawled out as quickly as he could and ran as far away from the car as fast as his legs would allow him. Seconds later, there was a big bang. A red flame of fire with black and grey smoke polluted the sky whilst bits and pieces of hot metal flew into the air in various directions. Bo felt lucky he’d escaped in time but he was livid. He had been deceived before and he had his own particular way of dealing with double-crossers. He got in his car and raced to Jonathan’s house. The car tyres gave a loud screeching noise as he stopped on the side road and dashed to the front door. He banged a couple of times on the huge hard wooden veneered door and waited impatiently. Seconds later he was greeted by a butler staring sternly at him.

‘This is private property. How did you get this far?’ the butler asked authoritatively.

‘I want to see Jonathan Crown.’

‘Mr. Crown is busy,’ the butler said and proceeded to close the door.

Bo quickly pulled out his gun and put it underneath the butler’s jaw. ‘Take me to him if you value your life.’

The capitulated butler did as he was told and Bo followed holding his gun in a shooting position. As soon as the butler entered the huge study he looked at his boss who was sitting at his desk.

With fear in his eyes, the butler apologized, ‘I’m sorry sir, he has a gun.’

The man in his sixties, white hair, and spectacles stood up looking very furious and spoke with authority. ‘What do you think you are doing?’ Bo could see the man didn’t look anything like the Jonathan Crown he knew.

Addressing the butler Bo repeated, ‘I said I wanted to see Mr. Jonathan Crown.’

‘I am Jonathan Crown,’ the aged man cut in sharply, ‘and who might you be?’

Bo looked flabbergasted as he stared at the aged man.

‘You’re Jonathan Crown?’

‘Unless you’ve met my double!’ he said with a touch of sarcasm in his voice, ‘I’m certain who I am.’

With a frown, ‘The man I met here yesterday looked nothing like you. Who was he?’ Bo questioned.

‘Impossible. This house has been closed for three months.’

Bo was lost for words. There was nothing more he hated than being played for a fool. When he had first met Jonathan, all he had agreed to do was to prove he could

impersonate Bono Spencer and then steal the picture of Whistler's mother. There was no talk about him murdering anyone. But following a change of plan he was persuaded by Jonathan that Bono would take the rap. However, now besides losing trust, it appeared he was not going to get the remaining half a million pounds he was promised. On reflection, maybe it would have been better if he had accepted Lady Longfellow's offer. *Should he take off and get out of the country before the police grab him or should he stick around and find out who the person pretending to be Jonathan Crown really is?*

As Bo returned to his car, two policemen in a panda car stopped him. With their hands ready to pull out their guns, they approached Bo and demanded that he stood facing his car. One of the police officers made him lean against it with his hands on the roof. The officer carried a search on him and pulled out the Beretta located in his jacket pocket.

'Look what we've got here,' said the police officer.

They immediately handcuffed him.

'What did I do?'

'You're under arrest Mr. Bo Greene?'

'Why? My name is not Greene.'

'What is it then?'

'Bono Spencer.'

'Whatever you say, you're being arrested on suspicion of murder.'

'Who am I supposed to have killed?'

'Detective Inspector CJ Fairfield will explain it all to you.'

The officers escorted Bo to their vehicle and pushed him into the back seat of the car. Bo didn't see any point of struggling. He sat quietly as he was driven to the police station and was locked up in a cell. He was allowed one phone call which he used to call Adelina.

Meanwhile, CJ had been busy. He had been working around the clock investigating the case and discussing his findings with Karina.

'We know what the murderer of Lady Longfellow looks like,' CJ said, 'but what puzzles me is why would a murderer allow his face to be captured on camera?'

'Maybe he wasn't aware he was being video taped,' Karina suggested.

'Impossible, because he was careful not to leave any fingerprints and knew how to con the face recognition App. So why didn't he take similar precautions to avoid being captured by the camera inside the apartment?'

'Shall we go and interrogate him?'

'Let's go.'

During the questioning Bo insisted he was Bono Spencer- a law abiding citizen.

'We've compared your finger prints with the sample we had on file.'

Bo interrupted. 'Stop lying to me Inspector, whilst you may have my finger

prints now, you certainly have no previous records to compare them with,' he said firmly.

'That's where you're wrong, buddy. Have you forgotten you provided a sample signature to Sergeant Dixon?'

'So.'

'Whose pen did you use?'

'Okay so you got my fingerprints from the pen, what does that prove?'

'On its own, nothing, but when we compare your prints from the ones we found in the flat where Lady Longfellow was killed, guess what?'

'You have no match because there were no prints left behind.'

'Is that so? How do you know that? Is it because you wiped everything clean?'

'No. I wore gloves. Strike that, I never said anything.'

CJ smiled. 'Would you like me to play the tape back?'

'You bastard!' an angry Bo shouted.

Bo continued to deny that he was ever there.

'Oh, you were... would you like to see a video clip showing how you shot that poor woman? We know you did. I have every confidence that the bullets extracted from Lady Longfellow's body will match the gun the police found on you. My only other problem is to determine if you are Bono Spencer or Bo Greene.'

'My wife will vouch for me, why don't you ask her?'

'Oh yes, your wife, don't worry we will. As a matter of fact Adelina is in the other room.'

'I want to see her.'

'Later.'

Bo began to realise he was in deep trouble. He was banking on the fact that Adelina would support his story and that would help his situation. After all, Adelina had agreed they would run away together and they had enough money to start a new life together. *Bo knew how much Adelina loved money - she would not betray his trust, or would she?*

After leaving the interrogation room, Karina went to see **Killroy**, an informant who had been fishing for information for her. It was drizzling again. Luckily, she had her umbrella with her, which she promptly opened to get cover though she had to struggle against a sadistic wind tearing at everything in its path.

Killroy habitually hung around by a coffee shop in a cul-de-sac where he met most of his contacts. He looked up as Karina walked towards him.

'High time,' he growled. 'One more minute and I would have gone.'

'Look, it's rainy and windy. That's more than I can take. So, don't give me a hard time.' Karina said.

He eyed her sceptically. 'Oh, really?'

'Really. I'm interested in what you said you've got. Let me hear.'

Killroy asked suspiciously, 'I assume you've brought the dough with you. Give it to me.'

'After you tell me what you've got.'

‘Okay. Okay. The man who impersonated Jonathan Crown was Lord Frank Longfellow.’

‘Are you sure?’

‘As sure as the money you’re going to give me isn’t fake.’

‘Here you are. You can check it if you want.’

‘I trust you lady.’

‘If you can tell me why, I’ll double it.’

‘His wife was having an affair so he hired someone to kill her and didn’t want it to be traced back to him,’ Killroy said and put his right hand out to collect his money.’

Karina paid him. ‘Thank you. I appreciate it.’

Two hours later Karina was talking to CJ in his office.

‘I have something very interesting to tell you,’ Karina began.

‘I like hearing interesting things. So tell me,’ said CJ.

‘A man impersonated Jonathan Crown. Guess what, that man was Lord Frank Longfellow.’

‘You mean the ex-politician, cabinet minister and husband of the dead Lady Elizabeth Longfellow?’

‘That’s right.’

‘But why?’

‘Well, after discovering his much younger wife was having an affair with her tennis coach, it would appear Lord Longfellow devised a clever plan to get rid of her.’

‘Wait a moment, what plan?’

‘Obviously, he didn’t want to kill her, himself. So in order for it to happen he hired someone...’

‘...and the perfect man for the job was Bo Greene,’ CJ completed the sentence. After a pause, ‘Since the police believe Bono Spencer is Bo Greene and he is on the run for one murder, they automatically blamed him for the second one,’ CJ concluded. ‘That’s assuming, of course, your informant gave you the correct information.’

‘That would explain why Bo didn’t bother to hide his face.’

‘I think we’re on to something here,’ said CJ. ‘Erm... how about... you pay another visit to Lord Longfellow? See how much he knew of his wife’s infidelity.’ CJ paused and then added, ‘as usual try be very measured and focussed with your questioning.’

‘As usual, CJ,’ Karina said with a cheeky grin. ‘And what are you going to do?’

‘I’ll think of something.’

Now that Bo Greene had served his purpose, Lord Longfellow (alias Jonathan

Crown) didn't intend to keep up his part of the bargain and wanted rid of Bo as quickly and as easily as possible. Unfortunately, his plan had failed and was furious. The door opened. A short slim man with sandy hair, Nasty by name as well as nature came in, walked over to the desk and stood beside Frank.

'What's wrong?' Nasty asked.

'Bo Greene is still alive.'

Nasty couldn't understand why his boss was so concerned. 'The cops have got him,' he said. 'Soon they'll discover his true identity and this time they'll hang him, not for one but two murders.'

'But he can tell the cops about me, can't he?'

Shaking his head Nasty responded. 'Having lied to the cops once before, who would believe him?'

Lord Longford looked carefully into Nasty's urgent grey eyes. 'What makes you so certain? This Detective Fairfield does... he has the habit of leaving no stone unturned until he gets to the truth.'

'What would you like done?' Nasty asked.

'We need to shut him up, and quick.'

'What about Bono Spencer?'

'We'll worry about him later... my boys have got him pinned down and are watching his every move...Err...tell me Nasty, how good is our security. I mean if someone were to attack this place would we be able to defend ourselves successfully?'

'I believe so. This place is like Fort Knox. We have several high quality reliable motion detection cameras beaming live videos from almost all angles, trained shooters with machine guns on duty twenty-four hours a day and electric fencing all the way around the property. Anyone trying to break in to this place would need their brain examined.'

'That's what I needed to hear. Thank you.'

Lord Longford felt a sharp sense of optimism that he was well-protected as he watched Nasty leaving the room.

Lord Longfellow lived at 56, Bellevue mansion, an elegant closely-guarded property. He was a tall man with white hair in his late sixties – an elegant-looking Englishman.

'Thank you for seeing me,' Karina said.

'I'm not exactly sure why we are seeing each other, Miss Fairfield. You said it was something about my wife's death.'

'First, just a slight correction, I'm Mrs Karina Fairfield, not Miss. I'm a bit sensitive about this, because I do like being married.'

'My sincere apologies.'

'Apology accepted.' Karina tried to be careful with her words. 'I don't mean to pry into your personal life, especially at a moment like this, but you and Lady Elizabeth have been married a long time, I'm sure there must have been disagreements.'

'If you mean have we ever had words, then the answer is yes. Show me a married couple who never argues and I'll show you a boring relationship.'

‘I’d love to know a little more about your wife, what she was really like.’

Lord Longfellow was silent for a moment. When he spoke, his voice was deep, quite manly. ‘Elizabeth was like no other woman I’ve ever known. She loved living. She was kind and thoughtful of others. She helped raised lots of money for children in need. Of course, we never had any children ourselves, unfortunately. She loved tennis.’ He stopped. ‘When I heard that she had been murdered, I – I felt as though my life was over.’ He looked at Karina and said quietly, ‘I really wished I had died in her place.’

‘I’m so sorry,’ Karina said. ‘I hate to press this, but did you suspect she was having an affair?’

Lord Longford looked at Karina and a tear filled the corner of his right eye. ‘No. I had complete trust in her.’ His voice was choked. ‘I know she was much younger than I, but we loved each other. The thought that she would cheat on me never entered my mind.’

‘Why do you think the killer wanted her dead?’

‘I don’t know.’

On her way out, Karina saw Nasty, the chief bodyguard of Lord Longfellow and decided to ask a couple of questions to him on the fly.

‘Can I ask you about Lady Longfellow?’

‘What do you want to know, ma’am?’

‘How long did you work for her?’

‘Actually I’ve worked for Lord Longfellow for three years and six months. However, I’ve known her for the same length of time.’

‘Being the wife of your boss, what was she like towards you?’

He smiled reminiscently. ‘She was extremely pleasant, a lovely woman in every sense of the word. I – I couldn’t believe it when I heard the news about the circumstance of her death.’

‘So you didn’t know about her affair?’

He frowned. ‘No.’

‘If you did would you have grassed on her?’

‘Maybe, maybe not.’

Karina studied him for a moment. She felt he was being very economical with his words, thus, there was no point in pressing him any further.

With no one else on her list, she made her way back to the police station. When she got there, the desk officer greeted her.

‘Hi, Karina.’

‘Is CJ in?’

‘Yes. I think he is in his office waiting for you.’

As she got to the door, CJ looked up as Karina walked into the office. 'What has Columbo been doing?'

'Solving a crime!'

'How did you get on with your meeting with Lord Longfellow?'

'Nothing that we didn't already know and I got to ask his chief bodyguard a few questions, but his responses were guarded and economical.'

'What's his name again?'

'Nasty.'

'Interesting!'

The phone rang and CJ picked up the receiver. 'There is an incoming call for Karina,' the voice said and CJ immediately offered the handset to Karina. 'It's for you.'

Karina picked up the receiver to take the call.

'Karina Fairfield here.'

'I've got some information I think you would be really interest in,' Killroy said, on the other end of the phone.

'What kind of information?'

'About the real Bono Spencer.'

'Really? Where is he?'

'What do you think I am, stupid? I hear your department is offering a reward.'

'If it leads to his arrest, yes. Now where would I find him?'

'He is in north Wales, hiding in a cave.'

'Can you be more specific?'

'Yes,' Killroy said and provided Karina with the exact location where Bono was hiding.

'If we find him you'll be rewarded.'

'I'll call you tomorrow to arrange collection.'

Bono, after sharing the cave with Elfed, needed all the sleep and rest he could get as he had a long day ahead of him the following morning. The moment he closed his eyes he fell into a deep sleep and soon after, he found himself having a horrible dream in which he saw a white cottony creature entered the cave. To avoid detection he had hidden himself behind a rocky wall in one of the mazes from where he had a clear view. He was witnessing what some people had long written about. Right in front of his eyes stood a strange figure of a beast which he quickly interpreted as a minotaur but immediately corrected himself as it was not half-human and half-bull as legend had it described. This creature's body was fully animal, his legs and arms were bulgy with black-white fur but from his shoulders upwards, he had the head, ears and eyes of a human, along with a white beard and moustache. The one most frightening feature was the creature's eyes that were so devilishly red that it sent a dreaded fear into Bono who was not usually easily frightened. The creature had a giant body. For all intent and purposes, he had four legs and was able to walk upright on his hind legs towards him.

Bono's eyes flickered, and he started to sweat. He tried to sneak out of the cave via one of the labyrinths; he found there was no way out other than through the way he came in. He tried to backtrack towards the exit, but found himself standing in front of the beast. As the beast tried to lift Bono up, he shouted, causing him to wake from his awful dream. On opening his eyes, he found three police officers towering over him with their guns pointing straight at his chest. He didn't dare try to struggle but instead surrendered himself peacefully.

'What is your name?' The senior officer asked.

'Bono Spencer.'

'What are you doing in this cave?'

Elfed intervened. 'I told him he could stay.'

'I needed a place to sleep! Is that a crime?'

'No, but strangling a nurse and killing an innocent woman is!'

'I haven't strangled anyone and what woman I am supposed to have killed?'

'We need to take you back to London to sort it out.'

Once the police had brought Bono back to the London police station, CJ and Karina continued the interrogation.

'So you're the man claiming to be Bono Spencer.'

'I don't claim to be him, I am Bono Spencer!' Bono replied.

'Well Bono,' CJ said, 'let's assume we believe you, can you tell us when did you leave London for Wales?'

'Two days ago.'

'That would be Wednesday, right?'

'Yes. I caught the 07:10 from Paddington.'

'Why did you go there?'

'To see an ex-girlfriend and solicit her help.'

'What kind of help?'

'I wanted her to help me prove that I am Bono Spencer.'

'Was she willing to do so?'

'Yes.'

'What's her name?'

'Melanie Cox.'

'Address?'

Bono recited Melanie's postal address.

Karina cut in. 'Why do you think your wife didn't vouch for you?'

'I've no idea,' Bono replied with bitterness in his voice. 'I think that somehow she's involved in this scheme'

'Did you strangle Nurse Mario Maccini, alias Twoface?' Karina continued with her questioning.

'No. Why would I kill someone who helped me to escape from a secure unit?'

'Someone did.' CJ said

'It wasn't me,' Bono replied challengingly. 'Can I have a cup of coffee please?'

'I'll get one of the officers to bring one in to you once we have finished with our questions,' Karina said.

'Actually, we've already had an interesting chat with Mrs Cox,' CJ told Bono.

‘You’ve seen her? How is she?’

‘Fine.’

The two detectives left Bono sweating in the interrogation room whilst they went into another room to talk to Adelina.

‘Why didn’t you ask Bono about the murder of Lady Longfellow?’

‘Given the time of her death, he couldn’t have done it.’

Addressing Adelina, CJ began. ‘Mrs Spencer we have reason to believe you are involved in an illegal scheme for which we are willing to take you to court. I must warn you that if you are found guilty, there is a good chance you will go to prison for a long time, but if you co-operate with us, we will ask the court to go easy on you. Do you understand?’

Adelina thought for a moment. She didn’t want to end up on the wrong side of the law and agreed to co-operate.

‘What do you want to know detective?’ Adelina asked faintly, as she lowered her gaze to the floor.

‘We’re going to parade in front of you two men you have seen before and who both claim you are their wife. We want you to tell us which one you think is your husband.’

‘Oh, not again?’ she objected.

Karina reminded her, ‘Remember you said you were going to co-operate,’ and took her into a dark room with a large two-way mirror.

‘Since you have done this once before, it should be easy; which one of those two men do you think is your husband, the one wearing shirt 1 or shirt 2?’

‘Can they see me?’

‘No. Take your time and when you are certain say the number.’

Adelina, with her eyes opened wide, shook her head, ‘I can’t tell they are so identical.’

‘But you did before when Sergeant Dixon came to your house,’ CJ reminded her.

‘It was different.’

‘Err... different in what way?’

‘I chose the one I had picked up at the airport.’

‘I see.’

There was a brief silence. Adelina reflected on all the money she was going to lose if she were to denounce Bo Greene, but she was also frightened what would happen to her if she was caught covering up for him. After several minutes of soul-searching she was unwilling to take any chances and decided to come clean.

‘Err... I hate to say that when Sergeant Dixon asked me to choose whom I thought was my husband, I chose the one I had picked up at the airport as I have already said, but later on I discovered I’d picked the wrong one.’

‘Oh, really,’ Karina said. ‘Do tell us more.’

Adelina moved her mouth close to CJ’s ear and whispered something.

CJ grinned. ‘If it will help, why not?’

Using the loud speaker he asked the men to face the wall and then he told them to drop down their trousers.

‘Getting kinky I see,’ Bono commented.
‘Yes this is quite out of order,’ Bo objected.
‘Just do it, will you?’

Bono reluctantly dropped his trousers, Bo felt obliged to follow suit.
‘And your pants too,’ CJ added.
‘That’s going too far!’ Bo shouted.
‘Just do as you are told,’ CJ said in a stern voice.

As soon as they did, Adelina without hesitation pointed to Bono.
‘You mean the one wearing shirt labelled no.1 is your husband.’
Adelina nodded. ‘Yes.’
‘Are you sure?’
‘Positive... you see my husband never had a birthmark on his right bum.’

You’ve been very helpful Mrs Spencer.
‘Can I talk to my husband now please?’
‘We have a few formalities to complete and then we will bring him to you.’
‘Detective Fairfield, can I ask you not to tell my husband about the birthmark.’
‘I understand.’

To conclude the questioning session, CJ lifted the two-way mirror and asked them to write down the answer to this question:

*‘On Melanie’s 31st birthday,
You were driving her to a party and
Your car radiator ran out of water.
What did she do? I want a concise but precise answer.’*

Only Bono wrote this answer:

‘Melanie,’ said Bono, ‘took my bowler hat, ran into a field and filled it with wee. In the process she got her bottom stung by a wasp.’

That was exactly the secret Melanie had previously whispered in CJ’s ear.

Karina couldn’t stop laughing.

Later on that day, CJ saw Bono. ‘For some days you greatly interested my department and I’m pleased to tell you that your story checks out. I have some more questions to ask you but not today. I want you to rest assure that there is no need for you to run away. On behalf of our department, I offer you a huge apology. You will suffer no further inconveniences. You can pick up your life where you left off. Your house, which I am sure you can’t wait to occupy again, is waiting for you and so is your wife. In fact, she is here waiting for you in the next room. As we have someone who has confessed to the strangulation of Mario Twoface Maccini, we absolve you of that crime. Needless to say, we may want your assistance on this later on,’ CJ said and turned Bono loose. ‘My assistant will take you to your wife...Oh, if I were you I would take this opportunity to catch up on a lot of missed sleep!’

Bono felt curiously at a loose end. At first it was very pleasant to be a free man, able to go where he wanted without fearing anything. He had been just over four days in the hands of the law and it was quite enough for him or *was it?* After his wife took him home she cooked him a very tasty meal and then he lit up the best cigar he had tucked away in a box. Nevertheless, he was still feeling nervous. When he thought of Bo Greene, he grew angry and wondered if he could come back and disturb his life again. After he had rested, he took a walk back through fields and lines of villas, terraces, slums and mean streets, which took him nearly two hours. All the while, his restlessness was growing worse. He wondered what the law would do to Bo Greene. They surely wouldn't hang him, for the UK government had banned this kind of barbaric punishment years ago. Even if they put him in prison for life, what if the law was too lenient and with good behaviour, they let him out at some point and he came looking for revenge? He felt the sense of danger and impending calamity and he had the curious feeling, too, that he alone could avert it, he alone could grapple with it. *Should he worry about what may or may not come or concentrate on rebuilding his life?*

The law did not initially handle his case with due care and diligence. If it had been left to those two officers, he would probably still be on the run. It didn't appear that the two officers had been disciplined, although Inspector Fairfield had publicly criticised them. *They did not even come to offer an apology*, Bono thought. He actually began to wish that he could approach Sergeant Dixon and tell him what he thought of him or even flatten him. He was rapidly getting into a very bad temper. He didn't feel like going back to his house and his wife. As he still had sufficient money, he thought he might check in to a hotel for a few days and rethink his entire life. His irritation lasted through his long walk, which lasted a while. He no longer had as much faith in his wife as before. He tried hard to see the world through her eyes. At the end of his walk, he popped in to a local pub and ordered a large whisky, which he drank in one swallow but it did nothing to cheer him. An abominable restlessness had taken possession of him. Here he was, a very ordinary fellow and yet he was convinced that somehow he needed to do something, anything that would stop a repeat of what had happened to him—that just being content with the fact that he had his life and freedom back was not good enough.

He tried but couldn't convince himself that the law would be on his side this time if the same thing should ever happen again. It was as if a voice kept talking to him inside his head, telling him to act, or he would never sleep peacefully again. The upshot of it all was that he would wait and see how the law dealt with Bo Greene then decide on his next move. ✍

CHAPTER 9 *The revenge*

Day Twelve

Saturday, 30, November, 10:00 am.

A week later, Bo Greene was in court standing in the dock being tried for the murder of Twoface and Lady Longfellow. As counsel for the prosecution questioned him, he looked up and his eyes unexpectedly caught sight of the familiar face of a man sitting in the gallery.

He immediately pointed his finger towards him and shouted, 'There's the man who presented himself to me as Jonathan Crown.'

There was a big roar coming from the audience as everyone looked up. CJ, using his binoculars, got a closer look. Two rows away from him sat Bono Spencer who also had a good look and knew Bo was telling the truth but he kept quiet.

The prosecutor said, 'You're mistaken, sir. For your information the man you've just pointed to is none other than Lord Longfellow, who as well as having been a respectable politician and cabinet minister, is also the grieving widower of the woman you murdered in cold blood.'

'I'm telling you that's the man who hired me to kill Lady Longfellow,' Bo insisted angrily.

With a clenched fist Bo shouted, 'I wish I could get my hands on you...'

'Your Honour, may we approach the bench,' the Prosecutor and Defender said simultaneously.

After a brief exchange, the judge asked the guard to take Bo away. As he was escorted out of the courtroom, he surprised the jailer and grabbed his gun from its holster. Holding it at the guard's head, he warned everyone to keep their distance from him whilst he paced tentatively backward leaving the Courtroom. Once he was outside, he forced the jailer to get into one of the waiting police cars for their getaway.

'You won't get far,' the guard warned.

'Shut up and get in the driving seat!' Bo ordered, keeping his gun pointing at the jailer whilst he moved to the other side of the car and climbed in to the passenger seat.

'Soon there will be cars and helicopters in the air following us.'

'I told you to shut up!' Bo said as he brought his gun closer to the jailer's head.

'Okay, okay,' said the jailer. 'Where do you want to go?'

'Just drive, if you want to live.'

As the getaway car moved out of the courtyard, Bo glanced back but couldn't see any one following them. After several minutes of driving, he heard the sound of a siren, which he figured, must be the police coming after him. Bo's car approached a set of traffic lights that had just turned to orange.

'Don't stop,' Bo instructed the driver.

'You want me to break the law?'

Bo put the gun close to the jailer's left temple and he yelled, 'You are the law...just keep going!'

'Okay,' said the jailer and he pressed down on the gas pedal even though he

saw a car coming to his right. The other car hooted and swerved, miraculously avoiding a nasty collusion.

‘Take the first right,’ Bo commanded.

He saw a cargo train running parallel to them and figured that if he could get to it he might stop the police pursuing him. He instructed the jailer to stop the car.

‘What?’

‘I said stop the car.’

‘Here?’

‘Yes, here. Pull over on the hard shoulder.’

The car came to a sudden stop. Bo got out, ripped out the car radio, put a couple of bullets in the car tyre and then ran across the field in pursuit of the cargo train. A man in an empty carriage saw him, slid open the door and extended his hand. Bo grabbed it and he got himself pulled in.

‘Thanks buddy,’ Bo said, glad to have been rescued until he discovered that the guy who had helped him into the carriage was an old enemy by the name of **Jack**, who only a few months back had tried to knife him.

‘Couldn’t you buy a ticket like I had to, you scum,’ Jack said with a grimace.

Bo frowned and then pulled out a gun from his jacket pocket. Jack lifted his hands in the air fearing for his life.

‘Put your hands down, I’m not going to shoot you. I just wanted you to know that I’m armed.’

‘I can see that.’

‘Relax.’

‘What, with a gun pointing at me?’

‘I get your drift.’ Bo lowered the gun. ‘Is that better?’ he asked.

Jack nodded with a timid grin.

‘Now I want you to jump off.’

Jack frowned. ‘What? Look mate; I’m not going to say anything... I see nothing... I hear nothing... I know nothing, that’s my policy.’

‘That’s great ...now jump!’ Bo ordered Jack as he pointed his gun at him again, ‘DO IT!’

Jack looked out and realised that if he didn’t jump he’d most probably be shot and if he did jump he also stood the chance of being killed in the process. Faced with two equally bad choices, he decided to choose the second option as it appeared to be the less risky of the two. Luckily, for him, as he threw himself out of the carriage, he managed to fall on a pile of hay.

The air in the carriage had a queer, rooty smell of peat, as it had several bags of compacted, decomposed organic debris. Strangely enough it had an effect on Bo’s spirits. He actually felt light-hearted. He might have been mistaken for a boy out on a jolly, instead of a man of thirty-seven very much wanted by the police. He was determined to seek out Lord Longfellow, who had deceived him, that every mile that went past put him in a more resolute state. Sitting on a bag of peat in the carriage he reckoned that he was far ahead of any pursuit. It had been a few hours since he had last eaten and he was getting very hungry. Also nearly fifteen minutes had gone since he’d boarded the train. He didn’t rule out that the jailer he’d left in the car would have somehow contacted his station and requested help causing him to think that there may

be police ahead waiting to search the train.

Suddenly Bo heard an ominous beat in the air and realised that his vantage-ground might in reality be a trap. He sat quite still and hopeless for a moment while the beat grew louder. Then he looked out into the grey November sky and there he saw something which set his pulse racing... flying low down, about a dozen miles from the east, a helicopter was rapidly coming towards the train. He was certain that the helicopter belonged to the police and that it was coming for him. He watched it from the carriage, for two or three minutes. Then it seemed to change its mind. It flew low along the hilltops and then in narrow circles over the fields, which Bo had left behind and landed. Bo began to think that the pilot navigating the helicopter might have spotted Jack, who was earlier forced to jump out of the carriage and thought it was Bo.

When Bo noticed the cargo train beginning to slow down, he jumped out and started to walk until he came to a tiny cottage set in a nook beside a waterfall. A brown-faced woman was standing by the door and she greeted him with the kindly shyness of village places. When he asked her for a night's lodging she said he was welcome to the 'bed in the loft' and very soon she set before him a hearty meal of ham and eggs and thick goat's milk. At night fall her husband came in from work, a tall fellow, who in one stride covered as much ground as three paces of an ordinary man. The couple asked him no questions, but it was clear they had him down as a city man. Bo happily confirmed their view. By ten o'clock he was starting to nod off in a chair near the fire and was swiftly directed to the 'bed in the loft' where he slept till seven o'clock the next morning. His hosts refused any payment and he was served with breakfast before he left.

Day Thirteenth

Sunday, 1, December, 09:15 A.M.

Bo returned to the city as he reckoned that the police would naturally assume that he was travelling further away from London in the direction of south port. He knew where Lord Longfellow lived from information he had received before, but expected his house to be heavily guarded. He needed a strategy to get to him. He had a plan but needed to wait until Monday morning to put it in to action.

Lord Longfellow was no fool. With all the bodyguards he had protecting him, he was confident they would successfully tackle Bo whenever he chose to show himself. However, just to be on the safe side, he doubled the number of guards, giving them all strict instructions to shoot to kill.

Meanwhile, in his home, Bono Spencer was unhappy with his wife whom he felt had let him down at a time when he most needed her. Adelina also felt uncomfortable with their reunion. She wondered if she should just take all of the money Bo had left behind and leave.

As they stood together in the lounge, Adelina moved closer to her husband and in a somber voice said, 'Bono, I don't know what to tell you...'

'You could start by telling me why you didn't back my story.'

‘You both looked so alike I just couldn’t differentiate who was who.’

‘But you did, you backed Bo.’

‘Bono, I’m not asking you to forgive my mistake... but please believe me when I say I genuinely believed you were the imposter.’

‘You did, did you? I suppose you now want me to pretend nothing has happened and we should return to the way we were.’

‘I know it’s difficult for you to understand, but still I wish you could. These past few days since the police took you away and then you going on the run have been a nightmare, especially after I discovered I had made a mistake.’

‘Oh yes do tell me, how did you come to discover that? Did he not make love the way I did? Or was he better that’s why you didn’t denounce him when you found out?’

‘I... I didn’t because...’ she stopped abruptly as she couldn’t get the right words out.

‘Because what,’ Bono insisted to know.

‘I was scared he would kill me. He isn’t as gentle and docile as you are, you know.’

‘Spare me the crap, will you.’

‘I’m telling you the truth, if you really can’t believe me, slap my face or throw me out... God knows, I probably deserve it.’

Adelina broke down in tears as she put her arms around Bono and rested her head on his shoulder hoping to gain comfort. However, the latter refused to put his arms around her, confused and unsure what to believe. *In the end she had come through and denounced Bo Greene to the police – surely that must count for something*, he reasoned. Despite his search for a cast iron proof to establish his identity, it was Adelina’s discovery of the birthmark on Bo’s buttock that had persuaded CJ. It fitted perfectly with the observation of Dr Durant. Karina’s enquiry into Bo’s history, dental records and birth records had also confirmed that he was indeed born with a birthmark.

Day Fourteen

Monday, 2, December, 09:00 A.M.

Having laid low overnight, Bo unobserved was at the London council, passing several offices until he had reached one which was slightly detached from the main building and which belonged to the chief Town Planner. There inside the office stood several tall filing cabinets, placed neatly next to each other, under lock and key. After trying to open a few of them without success he gave up. He didn’t want to shoot at the lock as that would have drawn attention, so he took a seat at the desk and waited for the chief planner to arrive. Five minutes later a tall, grey-hair gentleman dressed in a stripe-suit, carrying a briefcase entered the office.

‘Who are you and what are you doing sitting at my desk?’ the chief planner asked.

‘Waiting for you... who I am, is not important. I want you to do me a favour.’

‘Get out of here; I’m not in a mood to do favours. So go away now before I call the police.’

Bo took out his gun and pointed it at him. ‘Now,’ he said. ‘I want the plans for No. 56, Bellevue mansion.’

‘That’s the residence of Lord Longfellow.’

Bo nodded.

‘Why?’

‘Just do it, will you!’

The chief planner seeing Bo waving the gun began to get nervous. He lifted his hands in the air and said, ‘alright,’ and walked to a green filing cabinet, took out a file and handed it to Bo.’

Now look at the floor mat you’re standing on,’ Bo said.

The chief planner lowered his eyes and saw a white electric wire running away from it which was plugged into a timer with a flickering red light on display.

‘Stay on that floor mat until the light goes off, or else you can kiss goodbye to this world.’

When Bo had denounced Lord Longfellow in court and made his escape, Bono guessed that eventually Bo would seek revenge on his Lordship. Bono armed himself and waited for the attack to take place so that he in turn could settle his own score with Bo.

Bo needed the right arms and ammunitions if he was to mount a successful attack on Lord Longfellow’s fortress. He remembered Joe who had provided him with arms before and decided to contact him. Joe told him about an army barracks that was in the process of being re-located. Bo stole a jeep and drove to Knightsbridge on the southern edge of Hyde Park. After bypassing the depleted manned camp he helped himself to a machine gun, plenty of ammunition and a bazooka. Just as he had finished loading the equipment into a M5 High-Speed Army Tractor used during the Korean War, he saw a soldier approaching. Like a pro, Bo slung a knife at the service man—a new recruit still undergoing training—who fell to the ground before he could raise the alarm. Bo hurriedly drove the tractor to 56, Bellevue mansion where at exactly 11:15 A.M. he crushed through the main iron gates protecting the property unaware that Bono was hiding nearby watching. He saw guards working for Lord Longfellow begin to open fire at the tractor, but the countless bullets coming from Bo’s machine gun soon shot them down. Inside the mansion Lord Longfellow, noticing what was happening, ran for cover in a secured room in the basement. Using his mobile, he tried to get news of what was happening from his chief bodyguard, Nasty, who tried to reassure him that everything possible was being done, to defeat the attacker. There were bullets flying in every direction and bodies falling to the

ground like flies. Lord Longfellow began shaking with fear and felt powerless. For a moment, he wished he hadn't double-crossed Bo. A few minutes later, there was total silence. He rang Nasty again. Just as he was answering the call, there was an agonising cry indicating to Lord Longfellow that something deadly had occurred to Nasty. Starved of any news, and in a bid to save himself, he climbed out of the basement, ran to a parked Sedan and tried to drive off. Bo, looking powerful, vindictive and mean confronted him.

'Running away your Lordship?' Bo asked as he poked his head out of the Commander's cupola.

'Look Bo, you can have your money. I'll give you twice the amount I owe you.'

'Will you now,' Bo mocked. 'What about my freedom, which you promised me? Are you going to give me that also?'

'Yes, yes, I'll talk to the judge. You know I have influence.'

Bo held the Bazooka on his right shoulder. 'You've just ran out of influence you lying double-cross bastard,' and pressed the firing lever.

Within seconds, Lord Longfellow was pulverised out of existence by a missile. Bo climbed out of the tractor, exhausted but satisfied that he had completed his mission successfully. After almost forty-five minutes of fighting, it was all over. Bo had exacted his revenge. Now all he wanted to do was to go and pick up his money, still hoping that Adelina would want to run away with him. He disarmed himself and as he was walking away Bono Spencer surprisingly confronted him. Having abandoned all his weapons he had left himself armless and very vulnerable.

After witnessing what had just happened to Lord Longfellow, 'Now it is your turn to disappear,' Bono said pointing a rifle at Bo.

'Where did you come from?'

'From hell!'

Bo, referring to Lord Longfellow tried to explain, 'he made me do it.'

'Did he? No one can force you to do anything,' Bono retorted and now I'm going to make sure that you will never be able to do to anyone what you have done to me.'

'No listen to me please!' Bo got on his knees and pleaded.

'I've done too much listening and too much running,' said Bono and before Bo could say another word the former fired a bullet which hit his double in the middle of the forehead and watched a copy of himself crumbled to the ground. Bono feeling he had defeated his enemy dropped the rifle and walked away.

When Bono was first reunited with his wife he was not sure if he should pretend that nothing had happened and continue with his marriage, but now that he had committed murder he knew that sooner or later he would be tied to the felony and face at least manslaughter. He knew a bit about the law and had no illusions that having committed the crime he would have to serve the time. He was going to take himself to the police station and confess to his bad deed. It was getting very windy, with a promise of rain later, but his house was closer. He only had to pass Covent gardens and he would be home. He felt he should at least let Adelina know what he had done. As he was passing Queen Mary's Gate, he heard the siren of police cars presumably driving to 56 Bellevue mansion, where the massacre of Lord Longfellow

and his men had taken place. He figured, the moment the police saw the body of Bo Greene, they would want to question him. The first thing they would surely do was to take him round to Scotland Yard and grill him. He'd already experienced Inspector CJ Fairfield who was someone to be reckoned with. ✍

CHAPTER 10 *The missing link*

The doorbell at 3 Penny Lane rang just as the clock coo-cooed twelve times; Adelina could hardly walk in a straight line as she went to open the door. She had started to drink more and more since she and Bono had fought. Neither of them was happy with the state of their marriage. Standing in front of the door was a smart-looking blonde woman.

‘Is Bono in?’ The woman asked

‘Who’s asking?’

‘A friend.’

‘Does this friend have a name?’

‘Oh sorry, I’m Vinna.’

‘Well Vinna, Bono is not here and I doubt if he will be coming back.’

‘Don’t tell me you threw him out,’ Vinna asked hoping that this was indeed the case.

‘It’s more like he did it himself...’ Feeling like she could do with some company she asked, ‘Perhaps you would like to come in for a glass of wine?’

‘It’s a little early for me...but I wouldn’t mind a cup of coffee. By the look of it you could do with one too.’

‘Wine is the only thing that helps to calm my nerves these days.’

Adelina opened the door wider to let Vinna in. They sat down on the sofa. Adelina filled up her glass and shortly after left the room. Vinna took the opportunity to make a quick call to Thomas. Minutes later, Adelina reappeared with a tray.

‘Here’s your coffee. Help yourself to sugar and milk.’

Vinna poured some milk and added two spoons of sugar. She noticed there was another empty cup.

‘Would you like me to pour you a cup Mrs. Spencer?’

‘Oh please call me Adelina. I’d better have mine black with one sugar.’

The two ladies began chatting away mostly about Bono and the recent events. Neither of them had any idea what Bono had been up to. Vinna passed her slender fingers through her curls, stringing them out, as was her way when deep in thought. She was turning the whole matter over in her mind. Bono was the kind of guy she would have liked for herself. *With the Spencer’s at loggerheads, she might possibly get her wish after all*, she thought.

Fifteen minutes past twelve, the front door opened and Bono came in, looking beat. His countenance and manner were in every respect a demonstration of how bad he was feeling. It was a great surprise for him to see Adelina and Vinna sitting in the lounge. As the former saw him, she got up and went to give him a hug. He gently pushed his wife away.

Addressing Vinna, ‘what are you doing here?’ Bono asked.

‘Aren’t you pleased to see me?’

‘Of course I am.’

'I'm delighted everything came good for you. You've got your freedom back, your life and your wife...'

'Not for long.'

'What do you mean? As soon as the police capture Bo Greene they will put him away.'

'I'm not worried about him any more.'

'What then?'

Vinna could see that Bono didn't want to share what was concerning him. She assumed it had something to do with Adelina. Maybe if she was not around, Bono would feel more willing to talk.

'Can we talk in private for a minute?' Vinna suggested.

Bono glanced briefly at Adelina and then said, 'Sure,' and he followed her into another section of the house built as a spare guest room but full of huge boxes scattered everywhere.

She had moved so quickly, that Bono had needed to increase his speed to keep up with her. Once he had finally caught up with her, he saw Vinna leaning against a wall next to an old fireplace. The latter signalled to him to stop right where he was.

'Close your eyes immediately,' Vinna instructed and Bono obliged.

Vinna crept stealthily towards Bono and stood close to him. She took his arms and placed them around her waist. She then put her arms around his neck drawing him closer to her lips before planting a passionate kiss. Bono, who had wanted to do that since the first time he had set eyes on her, responded with equal fervour. As he moved his hand, he inadvertently dislodged Vinna's wig causing him to open his eyes. He immediately pushed Vinna away from him in disbelief.

'What the fuck!' Bono exclaimed when he saw Vinna standing there without her wig. He noticed the mask and peeled it off.

He couldn't believe that in all the time he had known Vinna she was in fact Reddy in disguise. Although a natural red-hair, she was dressed wearing a blonde wig and a skin matching latex mask. The masquerade was so incredibly good that it would have fooled anyone.

'Why the disguise?' Bono questioned and could hardly wait to find out.

Reddy began to explain:

On the morning of Monday 18th November as I was fitting my key into the office door, I noticed a man at my elbow. I hadn't seen him approach and the sudden appearance made me jump. "Good morning," the man said. Thinking he was you, I replied, "Hello Bono I thought your plane from Paris was not due until tomorrow morning?"

He steadied his voice with an effort and his hand was pawing at my arm. I got the door open and we both went in.

"Err, I took an earlier plane," he said.

"Why?" I automatically asked.

"I've sold the painting Whistler's mother and I'm taking it to the buyer today. Would you mind wrapping it for me?"

"No problem," I said and cheekily added, "If you don't mind getting it for me."

When he didn't appear to know where it was I began to get suspicious. I was further puzzled when he poured himself a stiff brandy and soda from the tray of drinks we usually keep by the desk. He drank it in three gulps and cracked the glass as he set it down. "Sorry," he said, "I'm a bit excited this morning. You see, having sold this painting puts us in the black."

"I never knew we were in the red," I replied.

I became even more suspicious when he sat down at my desk and started to play with his fingers, as a nervous person usually tends to do. Moreover, I knew you hated brandy.

Whilst I was aware, you were arriving at Heathrow, to further cross-check my suspicions I asked and purposely said, "It must have been very crowded at Gatwick this morning." When I wasn't corrected and he said, "Yes" I was sure I was dealing with an imposter, but I needed to be more certain and extra careful.

*A flickering smile over his drawn face began to frighten me and it became crystal clear to me that I had to play it cool. Suddenly the detective in me kicked in. Knowing the painting was heavily insured, I wrapped it and he took it away. I immediately checked with the airline if any Air France planes had landed at Gatwick or Heathrow and the negative answer made me realise that something fishy was going on. I deferred going to the police in the hope of finding out more. I called Adelina but she didn't respond. Therefore, the next day I went to see her at home. Before doing so I changed my appearance. I didn't dare go as myself for fear that whoever could have been watching me would recognise me. As I arrived, she was already in her car and was driving off. Intuitively I followed her. Half an hour later, we were in the arrival lounge at Heathrow and hiding behind a pillar I saw that Adelina had picked up a man who looked just like you and whom I assumed was you, until a few minutes later when I saw you I asked myself if I was seeing double. It became a fascinating case of doppelganger, which got me even more excited and interested. Initially I thought you were the fake, hence me spraying a drug on the handset as advised by **Thomas Long**, a private investigator-friend of mine who was on standby just in case I got into trouble. The drug was my attempt to cause you to collapse however, when this didn't happen I was temporarily disappointed but when I picked up the pen with your name on it I was relieved that nothing harmful had happened to you. Of course, at this point I was much wiser.*

*What a queer rigmarole, Bono thought. As he listened blinking like an owl, he was fairly convinced that she was being straight with him. It was the strangest sort of narrative, which many a time tales like that had turned out to be true. Bono had made a practice of judging the person rather than the story. If she was trying to pull a fast one, Bono reckoned, she wouldn't have turned up to his house like that and pitched such a story. There was no obvious reason for it. However, he hadn't quite understood at first and he had to keep stopping her and asking her questions. Nevertheless, he eventually got the gist of it. Reddy was an English girl from north London, who after leaving college, and being from a well off family, decided to go and travel the world for a year. She liked to read lots of detective novels, like Agatha Christie and Sherlock Holmes. She was also fascinated by the old television series *McMillan and wife* and had fancied herself as the wife. Thus, her appetite for being a detective grew and when she had seen an opportunity present itself, she couldn't resist.*

The story Reddy told explained a lot that had puzzled Bono— how Reddy

could really have been fooled in thinking Bo was him, and why Reddy appeared to have mysteriously disappeared.

The aim of the whole plan of Lord Longfellow was to complicate matters for the police as much as possible and arrange for someone to kill his adulterous wife, whilst ensuring he got away with it. Lord Longfellow's priority was to keep his good self in the clear always. The police, he reckoned, would be in total confusion figuring out who killed Lady Longfellow. If they eventually did decide who the culprit was, he could not care less, as long as he was not incriminated. The Lord cut no ice. If you're rich and powerful, you can get away with murder because you can buy favours and privileges. He was the politician who could con his way out of situations with double talk, he said a lot but never really said anything that made sense. In the House of Lords, he was the man who could never keep his mouth shut. He was always finding reasons to prevent certain bills being passed through. He was forever ready to make life difficult for the then Prime Minister, because his aunt was the leader of the opposition party and his father was denied a peerage.

Bono was so angry that he allowed himself to be deceived, that he couldn't resist slapping Reddy in the face. The smack was unintentionally so hard that it sent the latter to the floor. Having heard the angry shouts of Bono, Adelina had rushed to the scene.

'What's going on?' Adelina asked feeling quite concerned as she gazed at what she thought was the body of Vinna lying on the floor, 'Oh my God,' she gasped, her voice rising to meet her fear. 'What have you done to Vinna?'

Bono still looking angry said, 'You mean Reddy...'

'What are you talking about?'

'This woman you are looking at who has been passing herself as Vinna, is in fact Reddy in disguise. Turn her over and see for yourself.'

As Adelina turned the body over, she couldn't believe her eyes. 'This is...'

'Yes, this is Reddy,' Bono completed her sentence. 'Reddy has fooled both of us with her wig, mask and clever make-up.'

Suddenly, Adelina screamed when she noticed blood oozing from the back of Reddy's head.

'Oh no,' she said. 'There is blood oozing out. I think you've killed Vinna, I mean Reddy.'

'She can't be,' a shocked Bono said and went to check with his own eyes. 'Oh no she is dead, I didn't mean...'

They looked at each other petrified at what had happened and Adelina grabbed his arms firmly with both hands not sure what to do.

'We need to call an ambulance,' said Adelina.

'What good is that going to do? She is dead. There is nothing anyone can do.'

'I ... I can't believe this! Things like this just don't happen around here.'

He pulled away from her grasp and gripped her shoulders tightly. 'Adelina, be quiet,' he said. 'Let me handle this.'

He looked again at the lifeless figure before him. He noticed that a pool of blood had started to form near the top of her head. The chill of death ran through him, turning his blood cold as he allowed himself to imagine what might have transpired in Reddy's mind just moments before.

Finally, Bono had an idea. With Adelina's help, he wrapped Reddy's body inside a carpet and put it in the boot of his car. He would wait until 03:00 P.M. when he knew it was going to be dark thus less people about, and dispose of the body.

Adelina sat in the front passenger seat, whilst Bono drove to the White Cliffs of Dover, the nearest place he could think of, where they had planned to get rid of the body. Given there was very little traffic on the road, as Bono had anticipated, he pushed down harder on the accelerator. The quicker he got to his destination, the quicker he would be able to get rid of the body. Because of the speed restrictions and traffic cameras in operation, he tried not to break the speed limit. Suddenly there was a loud noise and the car began to slide out of control. Luckily, Bono was able to bring the vehicle safely to a stop. He got out of the car to investigate only to discover his front passenger side tyre had sustained a nasty puncture, a split to be exact. As he was about to open the boot to get out the spare, he noticed a police officer on his motorbike approaching. He quickly leaned against the boot of the car. The police officer, after getting off his motorbike, approached him.

‘That was a good piece of driving you did just then,’ the officer said.

‘Thank you.’

‘Do you need any help?’

‘Sorry?’

‘Do you want me to help you change the tyre?’ the officer clarified himself.

‘Oh, no thank you.’

‘Let me help you. It’ll be quicker with the two of us... Err you do have a spare in the boot?’

‘Oh yes... I mean no... I left it at the garage for repair and forgot to pick it up.’

‘You really should never drive without a spare.’

‘I’ll call the AA, they’ll sort it out.’

‘You’d better do that and get this car out of here. This is not a very safe spot.’

‘Will do, officer.’

The officer looked towards the front seat and saw Adelina. He asked Bono if she was his wife, which he acknowledged. He saluted her and before he went back to his motorbike, made a mental note of the car registration number.

‘What did you say your name was?’ the officer asked.

‘I didn’t but it’s Mr Bono Spencer.’

‘Okay Mr Spencer I hope you get back on the road soon.’

Once the officer returned to his motorbike, he took out his phone and ran a check on the vehicle. Satisfied that it wasn’t stolen, he slipped his gloves back on his hands, jumped on his motorcycle and rode off.

Bono pulled out his handkerchief, wiped the sweat off his forehead and then re-opened the boot. He removed the body to get at the spare wheel, which he quickly swapped with the punctured one and once again they were on their way.

Realising what a lucky escape they had just had, they knew if they were going to get away with their crime they both needed to stick together. After they argued and tossed insults at each other, they finally agreed it made more sense to put aside their differences and stand together as they had once done at the altar.

After driving for almost one and a half hours, they had finally arrived at their intended destination. They obviously didn’t want anyone to see them. Bono checked his watch. It had just gone fifteen minutes to five. Fortunately, the place at this hour was quite deserted and all the time they were at the cliffs, they saw nothing but the sea gulls. It took them a good ten minutes to carry out the job and once they had finally dumped the body, both their hearts were in their mouths. They hurried back home. Between them, they emptied half a bottle of red wine, rested for a while before packing two suitcases. That very evening they drove back to Dover to pick up the

hovercraft and cross the English Channel. They had thought of taking the fast speed train for the crossing but had changed their mind at the last minute. Just as the hovercraft was about to leave the port, a yacht came up and dropped anchor pretty well next to it. She seemed about a hundred and fifty tons, and Bono saw she belonged to a private owner. Her name was MELANIE, as it was clearly inscribed on both sides of the boat, which reminded Bono of his ex-girl whom he had never had the chance to say goodbye to. Worse still he had never got round to apologising to Graham for wrecking his precious blue Ford convertible.

Maybe we should have hired it for good luck, Adelina thought aloud.

‘Well it’s too late now,’ Bono replied.

Before leaving the house, Adelina had made sure that she left a note for the milkman together with the money she owed. She didn’t want milk bottles piling up and attracting suspicion that the house was unoccupied. ✍

CHAPTER 11 *Ghost from the grave*

When the Hovercraft landed forty-five minutes later at Calais, Bono and Adelina collected their bags and walked outside, it was raining, windy and cold. There was a long line of travellers waiting for taxis. They stood under the cover of an umbrella, which Adelina was grateful to have carried with her. Half an hour later, when it was finally their turn, a brawny man tried to push in ahead of them.

‘Get off!’ Adelina said firmly. ‘That’s our cab.’ They got inside.

The driver said, ‘*Où aller vous?*’

‘We want to go to the Ritz Hotel, *s’il vous plait.*’

He turned to look at them and said in broken English, ‘You’re sure you wish to go there?’

Adelina said, puzzled, ‘Why? What do you mean?’

‘That’s a very expensive hotel.’

Bono felt almost offended. ‘We’re sure. Only the best will do for us’.

‘Of course, *monsieur.*’

The driver shrugged, put the taxi in gear and started into the slow line of traffic.

The Ritz Hotel, renowned for its luxurious surroundings and fine dining, along with its chic spa and gym was located at 15, Place Vendôme, 75001 Paris, France. Under the glass ceiling, in the shade of the linden trees in the Grand Jardin or surrounded by music from a jazz piano, the Ritz Paris was a place where dreams came to life. Its sumptuous private dining rooms, finest tableware, lush gardens and world-famous cuisine were there for guests to enjoy. The Ritz Club and its swimming pool were also part of the Ritz Paris legend.

Adelina thought, *what if there is no reservation at the hotel. What if, when they got there, they found the police waiting for them?*

‘Is this your first time in France?’ the driver asked.

Bono was feeling edgy. ‘Cut out the small talk please...’

Adelina elbowed Bono and whispered, ‘he’s only trying to be polite.’

Nevertheless the driver had overheard what she had said. ‘It’s alright *Madame, je parle trop.*’

‘Any chance of getting us out of this jam? Take a different route perhaps?’

The driver shrugged. ‘This is France, *monsieur...* just wait until we get into Paris...’

‘Okay, see what you can do,’ Bono said in total resignation.

After a lot of hassle, they finally arrived at the hotel. Bono paid the driver, got out of the taxi, whilst the cold wind pushed them into a spacious reception lounge. A

young woman standing behind the reception counter, greeted them with a smile.

Bono spoke. 'I believe I have a reservation for two.' He was holding his breath.

The woman nodded slowly. 'Mr and Mrs Smith?'

'Yes, that's us.' Bono lied.

'Just the one night?'

'Yes.'

She reached behind her and removed a key from a rack. 'Room 302, third floor.' She handed it to Bono.

As if by magic, a porter appeared by their side and took their suitcases. The woman said, 'That will be one thousand, six hundred and fifty Euros please'

Adelina rolling her eyes, quickly reached into her handbag, pulled out a bunch of notes and handed them to the woman.

Later on in the lift, Adelina muttered to Bono, 'I didn't know we were buying the hotel.'

'Where did you get all of that money?'

'I'll tell you later.'

When she got to their room, Adelina was impressed. The interior was stunning: it was submerged in gold decors and drapes, with a massive king-size bed. A true grand dame of the Parisian hotel scene, with unparalleled palatial opulence, hence the expensive price tag!

Adelina sat on the edge of the bed and looked out of the pristine-cleaned window to the busy street scene below.

We've been lucky so far, Adelina thought. *We could both be sitting in a police cell, and facing –*

A soft rap on the door interrupted her thoughts. Bono came out of the bathroom, with a towel wrapped around his waist, wondering who it could be. He took a deep breath, walked over to the door and opened it. There was no one in the hallway, but he noticed that on the floor lay an envelope. Bono picked it up and took it inside. The piece of paper inside said *I know what you did. Be by the Musée d'Orsay in one hour.*

Bono stared at it.

'What does it say?' Adelina asked, looking worried.

Bono reluctantly passed her the note.

'You're not going to go, are you?' she enquired anxiously.

Bono nodded. 'Yes, but you stay here, it's safer for you. By the way, if I'm not back in an hour, check out immediately.'

'Where to?'

'Back to England.'

‘Oh no, they’d lock me up! Besides what would I tell the hotel manager?’

‘Invent something... a close relation has fallen ill or something similar. As we don’t know whom we are dealing with, a police cell is probably the safest place for you right now.

‘Bono I’m scared.’

‘Please don’t be...’

Even though the museum was a ten-minute walk from the Ritz hotel, at 9.00 P.M. that evening, Bono hailed a taxi.

‘Musée d’Orsay s’il vous plaît.’

The driver turned to look at him. ‘Musée d’Orsay? *C’est fermé.*’

‘I know.’

‘Vous y allez toujours?’

‘Yes.’

The driver shrugged and the cab leapt forward.

Musée d’Orsay is located on the banks of the Seine, opposite the Tuileries Gardens, housed in the former Gare d’Orsay—a Beaux-Arts railway station built between 1898 and 1900. The museum holds mainly French art dating from 1848 to 1914, including paintings, sculptures, furniture, and photography. Bono had visited it on several occasions.

Bono paid the taxi man, stepped out and looked around. He saw an empty bench nearby and went to sit on it, to wait for the mystery caller to turn up. A voice from behind Bono startled him.

‘Hello.’

Bono turned and his eyes widened in surprise. The last person he had expected to see was Nasty, the supposedly faithful bodyguard of Lord Longfellow.

‘Nasty! I thought you were –’

‘...killed?’ Nasty completed Bono’s sentence. ‘That’s what I wanted everyone, including my ex-boss, to think. It was my only chance of staying alive and not get massacred with the others.

Bono remained silent. He was lost for words.

‘Follow me please,’ he said curtly. Nasty started walking rapidly across the street. Bono hesitated for a moment and then got up and hurried after him. He walked into a small café and took a seat by the front window. There was only one other couple in the café. Bono followed and sat down.

A French waiter in a soiled apron came up to them, *‘Oui?’*

‘Two coffees,’ Nasty said and then looking at Bono, ‘I wasn’t sure you’d come, you’ve got a lot of bottle Mr Spencer, I have to give you that.’

‘In your note you said you know what I did?’

‘Oh yessss, my note.’ The two cups of coffee arrived. He took a sip and was silent for a moment, then like a shot he revealed what was on his mind. ‘You shot Bo

Greene.'

Bono's heart skipped a beat. All the time he thought Nasty knew about the death of Reddy (alias Vinna).

'Yes, I had to kill Bo. That was the only way I could make sure he never repeated what he did.'

'I understand. I don't care about him.'

'Oh! What do you want then?'

'Bo was given one million pounds to kill Lady Longfellow. He received half of it before he did the job, which he left with your wife. He never collected the other half because he was double-crossed. I'm not greedy, I just want half. That will still leave you with a tidy amount.'

Bono felt a sudden chill. 'Now you look here!'

'No, you look. You may think you're out of the country, but one word from me to the police...'

Bono cut in. 'Okay you've made your point.' He took a deep breath. 'Half it is.'

'That's a very sensible decision,' Nasty remarked.

Bono looked at him and said, 'Well, come with me to the hotel and we'll get this over and done with quickly.'

'Look Bono, I'll pick the spot where and when I collect the money.'

'You're a very cautious man!'

Nasty with a smirk on his face said, 'One has to be, if they want to live long.'

'Where do you suggest we meet?'

Nasty was thoughtful for a moment. 'I'll get in touch soon... Now turn round.'

'What?'

'Turn your face away from me and count to thirty.'

He began to count whilst Nasty made his exit. Bono felt he wanted to throw up. He had no intention of parting from half of the money. He thought of picking up Adelina from the hotel and just taking off, but was conscious that Nasty would probably be watching them and reacts accordingly. Instead, he had another thought – this whole situation was clearly blackmail. Bono was wise enough to know if he paid once he would most likely have to pay again and again. He had never liked loose ends. He got himself to the hotel as quickly as he could, only to find that Adelina was gone. He looked at his watch and found he had been gone for more than an hour. He immediately assumed that Adelina has followed his instructions. He called her mobile. It rang, but seconds later, he heard the annoying message: please *try later*. He tried again for a second time, whilst walking into the kitchen and there he saw Adelina's mobile. It was sitting on top of a piece of paper with a telephone number written on it. He rang it, but got the message: *this number does not exist*. He checked the hotel safe and found a bag of notes in a plastic wallet.

Bono took a seat, trying to figure out what the sequence of numbers might be for, whilst waiting impatiently for Nasty to get in touch.

The long awaited call came and it was brief.

‘There is a taxi waiting for you downstairs. Take it.’

‘Where’s my wife?’

‘We’ve got her. She’s safe for now.’ Then the line went dead.

Just as he had been informed, there was a black cab waiting in front of the hotel. Bono was surprised to see that he was the only passenger.

‘Where are we going?’ Bono asked.

The driver gave him no answer. The drive took forty minutes. Bono tried to make conversation, hoping to get an inkling of what he was about to face, but the driver drove on in silence with a grim-face. When the car stopped at a deserted area in what seemed to be the middle of nowhere, there was another car waiting. The driver told him to get out of the taxi and take a seat in the car.

‘This place we’re going to – is it far from here?’

Still there was no response from the driver. After a short, bumpy drive, the car entered a tunnel.

Where are we going in the middle of this bleak, frozen night? Bono wondered. The temperature in the car was freezing. Minutes later, some light began to penetrate through the windows. It looked like they were cutting through a mountain.

Bono looked at the rocks on both sides, and felt like he was in some weird, surrealistic dream.

The car suddenly jerked to a stop next to a waiting vehicle.

‘Get out,’ said the driver.

The latter made a u-turn and drove off. Out of nowhere his blackmailer Nasty appeared.

‘I can see you’ve got the money with you, throw the bag to me.’

‘I want to see my wife first.’

The door swung open and they entered in to a cubicle that looked like an elevator but which went below the ground, but on the floor there was a huge lid twice as big as a circular manhole-cover with a locking wheel. Nasty bent down and opened the lid to reveal a long ladder.

Bono asked, ‘Where are we going?’

‘To a bunker.’

‘How far down?’ Bono asked nervously.

He said, ‘Thirty feet.’

Bono looked at him incredulously. ‘We are going thirty feet underground in the middle of nowhere. *Shit! If Adelina and I were left buried there, no one would ever find us; what a grim prospect?*’ He thought.

The two of them climbed down. Once they were in the bunker, Bono saw

Adelina, her hands in chains screwed to the wall. He immediately rushed to her and put his arms around her.

‘Now throw the money to me,’ said Nasty.

Adelina looked at Bono and said, ‘Give him the bloody money.’

Bono threw the bag to Nasty and he caught it displaying a huge grin, which quickly disappeared once he had unzipped the bag, only to find it had nothing but clothes inside.

‘What the fuck is that!’ Nasty yelled angrily, waving his gun.

‘A change of clothes for my wife.’

‘Are you trying to be fucking funny?’ Nasty yelled again.

‘You didn’t expect me to bring the money like that whilst you’ve still got my wife, did you?’

‘I had every intention of giving her back to you alive, but now you’re both going to be buried here,’ and Nasty pointed his gun towards Adelina.

‘Wait! if you kill her, you’ll have to kill me too and you’ll never get the money.’

‘Where is the money?’

‘First take us back to the hotel. You can have it all. Visualise how half a million pounds will look in your hands and what you can do with it.’

Nasty thought for a moment. Greed got the better of him.

‘Okay let’s go.’

Bono cunningly tried to climb up the ladder first.

However, Nasty was quick to stop him. ‘Hey! have you never heard of ladies first?’

Bono moved aside and let Adelina go up, waiting until he got the signal to go next. As soon as he was about to reach the last step, he turned his head and saw Nasty close behind him still clumsily holding the gun in his hand. He knew that this was possibly the best chance he would have to despatch of Nasty, once and for all. He slung his right foot straight at Nasty’s jaw and the latter fell down onto the concrete floor below. Bono got out, quickly shut the lid and locked it. They got inside the van, which was sitting there. He looked at the ignition, ‘Shit, there’s no key,’ he swore. If he was going to use it to get away, he would need to find a way of starting the vehicle. He had never started a vehicle without a key before, but he knew some of the places where people tended to hide a spare car key. He himself, kept a spare key behind one of the wheel arches between the suspension coils. He looked there but couldn’t find any. Next, he frantically, removed the license plate to see if there was one attached to its back with duck tape. Still he couldn’t find one. He banged the bonnet with his fist, causing a huge dent. Suddenly he thought of another possible place. He looked on the jack mount on the van chassis behind the rear passenger seat, for a magnetic key holder, and *voilà*, he was in luck. He wasted no time in detaching the key, started the van and drove back to their hotel.

When Bono and Adelina entered the lobby of the Ritz Hotel, the woman

behind the counter stared at them. They weren't surprised because they knew how dreadful they looked.

Inside their room, they both had a shower and changed into their nightclothes. They were thankful that they were still alive.

‘What do you think will happen to Nasty in that bunker?’

‘Hopefully he will Rest In Peace!’ said Bono triumphantly.

‘What if he had taken a shot at you?’

‘Then most probably I would not be here talking to you.’

Adelina felt her body tremble with relief. She deposited a kiss on Bono's lips.

‘Let's get some sleep. We need to be up early tomorrow and get as far away from this place as we possible can.’

It was a restless night for both of them.✍

CHAPTER 12 *To Russia with love*

A week later: Day Twenty-one
Monday, 9, December. 09:00 A.M.

Both Karina and CJ were at their desks when a call came through, Karina answered immediately, but realising it was not for her, passed the handset to CJ.

CJ mimed to Karina, 'Who is it?' and she mimed back, 'the Commissioner.'

'Hello.'

'See how fast you can get down to the White Cliffs of Dover.'

'What's happened?'

'The sergeant on the scene will fill you in when you get there.'

'I'm on my way.'

Fifteen minutes later, a police helicopter had landed at the base of the cliffs and CJ and Karina were walking towards a body.

'Who found it?' CJ enquired.

'That guy over there,' the sergeant said as he pointed to an angler.

'Have you taken a statement from him?'

'Not yet,' said the sergeant.

'What are you waiting for?'

CJ had a peep at the body and noticed coagulated blood on the side of her head and neck. He turned to Karina, 'See if we can find out who she is and how long the body has been lying here.'

Later that day, back at the police station, Karina reported her findings to CJ.

'I've found out that the dead woman is no other than Bono Spencer's business partner. Her name was Reddy Donovan. She was killed elsewhere and then dumped at the scene of discovery possibly a week ago.'

'Let's go and pay Bono a visit,' CJ said.

'No good. The house is closed and there's a note in the rack where the milk bottles are usually placed, indicating they have gone away.'

'The bodies associated with the Bono Spencer story seem to be adding up,' CJ remarked.

Karina was puzzled. 'You don't think there's a connection, do you?'

'There has to be. Reddy Donovan mysteriously went missing when the police took Bono to the Tony Gilbert unit and she remained in hiding for the entire time Bono was on the run. Suddenly she's turned up dead.'

'CJ, Bono has regained his freedom, his wife and his home. Surely you don't think he would jeopardise that and have something to do with this death?'

'Why not? Consider this for a moment: If something serious happens to you and you are struggling to save yourself and I conveniently disappear. Then once you have sorted yourself out I turn up, would not you want to know where I have been?'

'Yes.'

'What kind of conversation do you think we would be having?'

'A difficult one.'

'Which could lead to what?'

'But how do you know she re-appeared before the Spencer's went away?'

'This is what we've got to find out. So why don't you get busy?'

'Yes sir,' Karina saluted CJ with a grimace and left the office speedily.

Most of daily newspapers had reported the death of Reddy Donovan. One newspaper even printed a gruesome photo of her inside a body bag and was fined for doing so. There were several comments on Facebook and Twitter. Everyone seemed to have a view.

When Karina got back to the police station, the police receptionist, **Joanna Bottom**, said, 'Glad you're here. I have a caller on the line for you. He's called twice already.'

'Who is it?'

'He wouldn't give his name, but said you would want to talk to him.'

'Put the call through to my office and I'll pick it from there.'

She hurried to her office and lifted the receiver, 'Karina Fairfield here.'

'Hi. I'm Thomas Long. We met once, a long time ago.'

'I remember. What can I do for you Mr Long?'

Thomas Long was a private investigator. Karina scratched the bridge of her nose to rid herself of an annoying itch.

'I wonder if I could stop by your office and see you?'

'Certainly. Can you come right away, if possible?'

'I can be with you in twenty minutes.'

'I'll wait.'

Twenty minutes later Thomas was talking to Karina. He started his story:-

'On 2, December, Miss Donovan called me saying she was at Bono's home and was ready to confess what she had been up to. I told her that was the right thing to do and to call me back to let me know how she'd got on.' He paused and took a deep breath, and then added, *'When a week had passed and she still hadn't called me or answered any of my many calls, I decided to go and visit her at her home but she was not in. Later that day I was shocked to hear the news of her death on TV during a news flash.'*

'I understand from my colleague that she had disappeared since the day the Bono Spencer story began.'

‘Well actually that isn’t true,’ Thomas Long said and went on to explain. ‘You see—’

After listening to Thomas, ‘Oh, I see,’ said Karina raising her eyebrows. ‘Thank you for your account.’

‘Do you have any idea where the Spencers might have gone?’ Karina asked.

‘No, but Mr Spencer went to Paris frequently, that may be a good starting point.’

‘Thank you.’

As Thomas left, CJ came in and he couldn’t wait to hear what Karina had discovered.

‘That guy I just saw leaving, isn’t he Thomas Long?’

‘Yes, do you know him?’

‘Not really, but I have seen him around.’

‘Guess what he just told me?’

‘I may be many things but mind reader is not one of my skills!’

‘Just as well, otherwise I would be like a loo with no door for privacy. Why don’t you sit down and listen?’

Karina told CJ how Reddy Donovan started to play detective when she suspected her business partner, Bono, had a look-alike impersonating him. To stop anyone recognising her, she changed her appearance and her name, but called Thomas Long to tell him what she was up to and relied on him to be her backup in case she got into a mess... Before she went to see Bono, she informed Thomas about her intentions.’

‘So Reddy and Bono did meet each other?’

‘Ha ha.’

CJ looked at the kettle and saw steam coming out. ‘Has that kettle just boiled?’

‘I was about to make a cup of coffee, do you want one?’

‘I’ll have mine black please.’

‘Any thing else to add?’

‘One more thing. When Reddy didn’t get back to Thomas as she had promised, the latter made several attempts to contact her and even went to her home but Reddy was nowhere to be seen.’

‘I guarantee you when we find Bono and get his side of the story, there will be a sad tale behind it all.’

‘What do you mean?’

‘I’m off to the Ritz.’

‘The Ritz in London?’

‘No. Paris.’

‘This is no time for enjoyment.’

‘Actually to bring back Bono.’

‘What makes you think he is there?’

‘What better place to enjoy half a million pounds, tax free.’

‘The Bahamas??? CJ, you’re not making any sense. Do you know something I don’t?’

‘That’s how much Lord Longfellow paid Bo Greene to get rid of his wife, and my source tells me he gave the money to Adelina for safe keeping as they were planning to run away together...’

‘...and now with Bo Greene out of the picture...’

‘...you’ve got it...or should I say Bono and Adelina have got it?’ CJ left the office with a huge grin on his face.

As CJ was leaving, Karina concluded, ‘I guess you won’t need me to prepare dinner for you tonight?’

That afternoon at London Heathrow airport, CJ boarded an Air France jet to Charles De Gaulle airport. Karina had telephoned the Ritz hotel, Paris, to reserve a room for one night. Karina and other sources have filled CJ’s mind with lots of information and he just wanted some light conversation during his flight.

He turned to look at the person sitting next to him. She was in her thirties, slim, with black hair and wearing a pair of glasses which made her look very fetching.

‘Good afternoon,’ CJ said.

‘Ah, you are English?’

‘Yes.’

‘Many English men come to Paris. It is a beautiful city.’

‘So I’m told.’

‘You have a familiar face.’

‘Just an ordinary one.’

‘Ordinary maybe, but a nice one.’

‘Very nice of you to say so. You’re not too bad yourself.’

‘I am Fleur Dubois.’

‘I thought you would be French! Your accent you see. I’m delighted to make your acquaintance, Miss Dubois. I’m CJ Fairfield.’

‘Not the famous English detective?’

‘I’m afraid, you’ve caught me,’ CJ smiled pretending to be embarrassed when in fact he loved it when people recognised him.

‘Are you working on any interesting cases presently?’

‘We’re always trying to catch the baddies.’

‘Is this trip business or pleasure?’

‘Business, I am afraid.’

‘Pity.’

‘Why?’

‘Paris is so beautiful, it is even more beautiful when all the Christmas lights are up illuminating the city.’

‘I believe you.’

Miss Dubois moved a little closer to CJ. ‘Will you have any free time while you are here? I would love to discover how your mind works.’

‘Is that all?’ CJ mumbled.

‘Did you say something?’

‘I said, not on this occasion, sorry.’

‘Oh I think we’re ready to take off.’ She quickly made the sign of the cross.

CJ smiled and found it amusing how *flying could put such fear in people when in fact it was the safest mode of travel.*

There was a line of taxis in front of the Charles De Gaulle Airport (CDG). CJ picked one to drive him to the hotel.

Half an hour later, standing in front of the receptionist behind the counter she said, ‘We’ve been expecting you, Detective Fairfield. Welcome to the Ritz.’

‘Thank you.’ CJ signed the register.

The receptionist picked up the telephone and spoke into it. She then replaced the receiver and turned to CJ.

‘I’m so sorry, sir, your room is not quite ready. Please take a seat and I will get the bartender to serve you a drink – our compliments. I will call you as soon as the maid has finished cleaning it.’

CJ nodded, ‘Very well.’

Thirty minutes later CJ was in his room, unpacking. His first step was to go downstairs, look through the guest register, talk to the receptionist who was on duty on 2nd December and ask her a few questions. These were two things, which he could not wait to do. As he came out of the lift, he met **Henri Dumas** who grinned at him.

‘What are you doing here detective?’

‘Business.’

Henri was a bellhop, only sixteen years old, whose ambition was to be the best detective ever. He was quite a character, a great fan of the Belgian fictional detective Hercule Poirot. Just as Poirot, Henri was short, somewhat vain, with brilliantined hair but without the waxed moustache.

‘Were you on duty last Monday, Henri?’

‘Yes.’

‘You didn’t by any chance see this couple?’ CJ showed him a picture of Bono and Adelina Spencer.

‘I did. They had two suitcases, which I carried to their room. The woman held on to her hand luggage as if it had gold in it.’

CJ was studying him. ‘Is that so?’

‘What room were they in?’

‘Room 302.’

‘What’s your interest in this?’ Henri was curious.

CJ said evasively, ‘I’d like to talk to them. But first I need to eat something before the kitchen shuts.’

‘You’d better hurry.’

‘Then I’ll go for a bite straight away. Good bye.’

The meal was delicious. When it was over, CJ said, ‘I’m going to hate myself in the morning. But it was worth every bite.’

‘I’m carrying out an investigation. I believe the couple I am looking for stayed in this hotel, may I look through the guest register?’ CJ asked the receptionist and she nodded. He scanned through the pages but couldn’t see the name Spencer listed anywhere in it. He looked to see who had occupied Room 302 and found it was a Mr and Mrs Smith.

‘Were you on duty on 2nd December?’ CJ asked the receptionist.

She reflected for a moment. ‘That was last Monday. No, but my colleague was.’

‘Can I speak to her for a minute please?’

‘Of course. I’ll get her.’

Seconds later a young woman approached CJ and said, ‘you want to speak to me, detective?’

‘Could you take a look at this please?’ CJ showed her a photo of Bono and Adelina.

As soon as she saw the picture she said, ‘that’s Mr and Mrs Smith.’

‘Is that what they said their name was?’

‘Well not exactly. You see they presented themselves and said they had a booking. I checked my planner and asked if they were Mr and Mrs Smith and the gentleman said yes. I found it strange because minutes before a Mr. Smith had rung requesting us to cancel his booking. As the room was available, I decided not to argue.’

‘Are they still here?’

‘*Non*, detective. They settled their bill and left early the next day.’

‘How did they settle their bill?’

‘Cash - which was unusual, *Presque tous nos clients s’installent par carte.*’

‘Any idea where to?’

‘*Non*, but I did see the lady looking at a brochure when I served them coffee in the lounge. The name Bahamas did get a mention and Mr Smith said something about extradition. Not sure what he meant.’

CJ remembered Karina saying, *the best time to visit the Bahamas is from mid-December to mid-April, the country's peak season.*

The receptionist turned to go and then turned again to face CJ. ‘Detective I don’t know how important this is, but after the Smiths had checked in, shortly afterwards Mr Smith left, then sometime later a man came to collect Mrs Smith. Then round about nine o’clock when I was preparing to go off duty, I saw Mr and Mrs Smith in the hotel lobby looking dishevelled, like they had come out of a

cave.'

'Is that so?'

'Well I thought I'd just mention it.'

'I'm glad you did. Thank you.'

CJ came to Paris hoping to make an arrest, but found he was a week too late. From the information he had acquired, he was of the view that someone was either assisting or pursuing the Spencers. His instinct told him that Bono and Adelina were on the run and he needed to catch them before someone else did. However, where? One thing he feared - if they managed to get to a country where Britain had no extradition treaty in place, getting them back to stand trial would be virtually impossible. On this sombre note, he retired to bed.

Day Twenty-two

Tuesday 10, December. 06:35 A.M.

The flight back from Paris to London Heathrow took one hour fifteen minutes. CJ noted that most of the passengers were dressed in winter clothing. *I should have dressed more warmly*, CJ thought.

All the way back home, he thought of Bono and Adelina. He wasn't sure whether he should feel sorry for them or not. From the little that he knew of them, he would have never had them down as killers. *But then there is killing instinct hidden in all of us*, he thought. *It's how we channel this tendency, which makes us different.*

CJ was getting impatient. He was keen to wrap up the case before Christmas.

Talking to CJ, Karina said, 'Well, while you're in Paris, you shouldn't miss the latest find here.'

'Tell me.'

'You were absolutely correct in your assumption that Bono had something to do with Reddy's death. We found a vehicle abandoned in a car park at Dover and there's no prizes for guessing that the registered owner is Bono Spencer.'

'Really! Err... did you—'

Karina cut in. 'Yes, I got the forensic team to sweep the car and we got confirmation from the DNA tests carried out on the dried blood found in the boot which belonged to Miss Reddy Donovan.'

'Great job.'

'And how did you get on?'

'Unfortunately, I got to the hotel too late. The Spencers were there for one night only and their whereabouts now is unknown.'

'Not even a little hint where they might have escaped to?'

'Just a vague one.'

'How vague?'

'They're probably lying low, somewhere very hot or somewhere beyond our

jurisdiction.'

'That's all we need.'

'You know,' CJ paused for a moment. 'You and I could do with a break. How about we go and see the *Mousetrap*?'

'When?'

'Tonight.'

'Sounds great!.'

'Good.'

Agatha Christie's *The Mousetrap* was the world's longest consistently running play in British theatre history and was being staged at the St Martins Theatre, London.

Karina felt the play was a bit flat. However, she was in no doubt it was a great play in its day and had had a huge influence on the crime dramas of today. CJ agreed that nowadays *The Mousetrap* would be more of a museum piece than a thrilling piece of drama. Still it was a pleasant evening out.

As the lights came on for the intermission, CJ got to his feet.

'Follow me. Quick.'

A mad dash was starting up the stairs.

'What's going on?'

'You'll see.'

When they arrived at the top floor, the sight of half a dozen serving tables laden with bowls of caviar, bottles of whisky and ice greeted them. The theatre-goers who had arrived upstairs first were busily helping themselves.

Karina whispered in CJ's ear. 'They really do know how to put on a good show.'

CJ whispered back, 'This is how the upper class lives. Remember that around 22% of people in the UK are in poverty and 34% of children also are.'

Karina and CJ mingled with the crowd as best as they could. The lights started to flash. It was time for the second half.

The second half was a bit better, but CJ's mind kept flashing back to Bono and Adelina.

Where could they have gone? Bono Spencer was a clever man. A very, very clever man—he wouldn't have been that stupid to commit murder and think he could get away with it. CJ debated with himself. It was an unfortunate accident. It must have been! Bono Spencer had fought hard to get his freedom back and...

Suddenly the curtain fell interrupting his thoughts. The play had ended and he struggled to remember how it had finished.

When they were in the car, CJ said, 'Sorry if it wasn't your kind of an evening out!'

Karina turned to look at him. He looked disappointed. Karina wanted to say, 'Look we've both been working very hard to close this case and almost forgot we have a personal life together that we also need to take care of.' But instead what came out of her mouth was, 'I really enjoyed spending that time with you, *spasiba*.'

'Did you just call me a spastic?'

'Oh, *spasiba* means, Thank you in Russian.'

‘That’s it,’ CJ said, shaking his head with a huge grin on his face.
‘Have you just had a eureka moment?’
‘You could say that. Erhm...Where was Adelina born?’
‘Erm...Russia, I-I think,’ she answered hesitantly. ‘Err...you don’t think...’
‘I certainly do. That would be a logical place to go and there is no extradition treaty in place.’
‘Shit... Whoops, sorry,’ Karina covered her mouth.

Before leaving the Ritz hotel, on the unexpectedly morning of 3rd December, Adelina received a call from her mother.

‘Adelina, are you sitting down?’
‘No. Should I be mother?’
‘Well, I have bad news for you!’
‘What’s happened?’
‘It’s your father... he’s suffered a stroke.’

Adelina was disturbed.

‘When did it happen?’
‘Last week.’
‘Last week? And you waited that long to tell me?’
‘Each time I rang you, I got a message saying *out of reach*. Where are you now?’
‘In Paris.’
‘I thought you live in England?’
‘Yes I do, but... never mind... how is dad now, is he okay?’
‘He’s slightly better and the doctors have allowed him to come home. They say it will take time before he regains full function of his right arm. He’s – he’s so—’
She stopped to wipe a tear. ‘He misses you and would like you to come up here. Can you come?’
‘Of course I will.’

Bono overheard most of the conversation. ‘Bye bye Bahamas,’ he mumbled.
‘Sorry darling I want to see my dad.’
‘Oh, sure, Russia here we come. No problem.’
‘At least, you’ll finally get to meet my parents.’
‘I hope they like me.’
‘They will.’ Adelina planted a kiss on his cheek and they left the Ritz hotel.
Destination: Saint Petersburg.

Day Twenty-three
Wednesday 11, December. 06:35 A.M.

Adelina's parents, Mikhail and Tatiana Tsiolkovsky, seventy-five and seventy-two years old respectively, lived in a charming cottage on Nevsky Prospekt, one of the longest streets in Russia housing some of the most important buildings in the city. During Christmas, this place brightens up with the glory of Christmas lights and other festival additions. As it was Bono's first time in Russia, he was impressed with the lavish architecture, incredibly clean streets and the awe-inspiring monuments that littered every major street corner and avenue.

Bono loved the place. 'It's really nice here,' he told Adelina.

Adelina kissed him on the cheek. 'I'm glad you like it. We'll be spending a long time here.'

When Tatiana opened the front door of the cottage, mother and daughter stood there looking at each other. Then Tatiana rushed forward and took Adelina in her arms. 'Adelina, my baby!' Tears running down her cheeks.

When they finally let each other go, Adelina managed to introduce Bono; 'Mum, this is Bono, my husband.'

'*Dobro pozhalovat...* So you're the handsome prince my daughter married!'

Adelina watched the blush on Bono's cheeks grow.

Turning to Adelina, Bono asked, 'What did she say?'

'Welcome.'

'Oh right.'

Adelina whispered in his ear, 'she likes you,' and then looking at her mum again, 'where is dad?'

'Sitting in the lounge, you go right in,' Tatiana opened the door wider.

As soon as Adelina set eyes on her dad tears began to run down their cheeks. They kissed and hugged each other for a long time. The last time they had seen each other was, fifteen years ago when his daughter had just turned twenty-three.

'You are even more beautiful now.'

'Oh thank you dad.'

Adelina noticed a photo of herself and her dad in a silver frame on display on the side cabinet. She was sitting on his lap on the balcony. It was one of Adelina's earliest memories of her father. She was only six years old then. She remembered him taking her into the bar of a local *boutique* crowded with men. He lifted her up to a dizzyingly high stool. He ordered a unit of rum for himself and a small bottle of lemonade for her. She remembered how proud her father was when all his drinking friends crowded around to admire her and remarked on what a heart breaker she would be one day. As some of them tried to cuddle her she recalled how she clung to her dad for fear of losing him.

Her dad had been a travelling sales representative, for a well-known drug company. He had explained to her that his work took him to far away towns and he had to be away from her and her mother for weeks at a time so that he could buy her nice shoes and pretty dresses. Adelina used to wait for his presence rather than his presents. When he left, she would go into her room and cry herself to sleep. During

those early years, her mother whom she saw everyday, seemed at a loss, moody at times. However, when her father was home, everyday was like a holiday, full of treats and presents and surprises. Adelina felt that they were a real family, like other families, but then he lost his job and all the joy suddenly went away causing her to become a loner. In her neighbourhood, the children would come and ridicule her cruelly. She defended herself as best as she could. As soon as she turned eighteen, she found a job as an office assistant. Five years later her body was beginning to show the promise of a ripening woman. She would examine herself in the mirror for hours on end, brooding about how to change her fate. There were two boys who thought they were in love with Adelina. One was a foot taller than Adelina. He had dry skin and spots all over his face. He was going to become a lawyer one day and join his father's law firm earning lots of money, but ended up being a drug addict. The other was fat and shy. He was studying to be a chemist, aspiring to create a pill that would give people eternal youth. He never grew up. However, there was a boy who Adelina had her eye on. His name was **Yuri Kerzhakov**. He was mad about football. His dream was to become the next Pelé. He was tall and insanely handsome and had the looks that any woman would be willing to die for. The only problem that kept Adelina from marrying him instantly was the fact that he was not aware she was alive. Every time she passed him in the street, her heart would begin to pound wildly and it would go *boom, boody-boom, boody-boom, boody-boom, boody-boom, boom... boom... boom*, she claimed. She would pray he would say something clever like ask her for a date. However, they would pass each other in silence.

The financial problems in the family became acute. Her father desperately tried to find something else to do to bring in some money. He had grandiose plans that never materialised. In the end, Adelina decided to help herself. She discovered she had a talent for singing. When a career opportunity in South Wales presented itself, she took it. Each month she sent her parents some money.

Since she had arrived in Saint Petersburg, Adelina had spent most of her time with her father leaving Bono to explore the area on his own. ✍

CHAPTER 13 *Home is where the heart is.*

One year later
18, November. 08:35 A.M.

Bono Spencer was an unhappy man. The clever little art dealer sat on a bench in the garden of his in-laws, a cigarette between his teeth and gloomily contemplated his future. From the way the situation looked, as long as he and Adelina stayed in Russia, he knew they were safe from prosecution. However, after almost one year of living in Russia, Bono was getting bored with his life. He missed England and wished he could return but knew if he did; the police would surely arrest him and possibly his wife too. Having lost his freedom once he was fully aware of what it was like and did not want to lose it again, but for him to spend the rest of his life within the confinements of Russia was worse than being in prison.

Since he got married, Bono had built lurid fantasies around Adelina and then Bo Greene had to come between them. He had no regrets reducing him to dust and if he were to finish up in prison for it, in a perverse sort of way he would feel a degree of satisfaction for standing up for himself, but instead he faced prison for accidentally killing a business partner with whom he had enjoyed working with. He looked up and caught sight of Adelina sitting on a black imitation leather couch next to Mikhail, and as he studied her for a moment, a lump caught in his throat. The last thing he wanted was for his wife to end up behind bars too. He spent hours figuring out the best way to handle things, so that he could protect Adelina from being indicted too, but he reluctantly concluded that there was no way if he wanted to continue having her in his life. Bono sighed, snuffed out his cigarette, walked over to the door and opened it.

‘Adelina,’ he said, ‘can I talk to you for a minute?’ Adelina followed him into the garden.

Once he sat her down, he faced Adelina and spouted it out. ‘Adelina, I have decided to give myself up to the police.’

He watched her digest the news, her expression giving no clue as to what she was feeling.

He quickly added, ‘You will of course stay here and you will be safe.’

He saw Adelina stiffen and it was almost as though she was going to have a fit. As he opened his mouth to explain why he’d come to that decision, Adelina yelled at him.

‘If you think I’m going to let you face this situation alone, you’ve misjudged me. I know you want to protect me. It’s time that I start standing by you... just tell me when you want us to leave,’ and she got up, leaving Bono staring after her in a state of

complete confusion.

Adelina's experience in England had been fine until she'd got married and Bono wanted her to stop working. Then life became boring for her. Since deep inside a little part of her had always preferred her life in Britain than her homeland Russia, she knew she would have to try harder by perhaps doing things that were more satisfying and find a better circle of friends.

The very same morning Bono placed a call to Scotland Yard. CJ Fairfield was in his office, feet on the desk, devouring an egg sandwich when the call came through to him. He lazily picked up the receiver.

'Detective Inspector Fairfield at your service,' he said rather casually, and took another bite at his sandwich.

'This is Bono Spencer,' the voice on the end of the phone said.

CJ couldn't believe his ears and nearly ended up choking himself. He sat up and quickly composed himself.

'Hello Bono,' he said and signalled to Karina to put a trace on the call. 'Where are you?'

'Where I am is not important and if you're trying to trace this call, don't waste your time. What is, however, important is that I want to give myself up.'

'You're making the right choice.'

'Take this address down, as this is where I would like you to pick me up from.' Bono proceeded in reading out the address to CJ.

'What about your wife?'

'Oh, she'll be there too. All I ask in return is that you give us a bit of dignity. Can you do that?'

'You have my word of honour,' said CJ.

'On 21st November, I will be waiting for you at the address I have just given you.'

'I've got it.'

The line went dead. He immediately sensed a sign of relief. Bono made another phone call, this time to the manager of Pearly Bay Hotel in the Bahamas on the island of Great Inagua and made a reservation for two, for two nights starting on, 19th November, which would be exactly one year since his first wedding anniversary which he had never managed to celebrate. He requested the very best room they had available. He insisted that it had access to a private swimming pool and a terrific view of the ocean. He dictated a special menu.

One piece of good news was that Adelina's father had fully recovered from his stroke. On the morning of the 19th November, Bono and Adelina said goodbye to Mikhail and Tatiana and made their way to the airport. There were the usual tears between mother and daughter and the expression on Mikhail's face was enough to indicate his sadness.

When the plane landed at Inagua International Airport, Bono and Adelina Spencer went through customs then straight into a waiting limousine. The road to Pearl Bay hotel wound along a narrow road, through the beautiful valley with its rich

hills and fertile farms. It was a clear, starlit night and the farmhouses in the distance were pools of light, like oases in the darkness.

In the comfortable back seat of the limousine, Adelina and Bono talked. He told her how delighted he was to have met her parents and know that her mother Tatiana approved of the man her daughter had married. He added how pleased he was that her father has recovered from his stroke. Adelina listened happily and told him how delighted she was that they were still together. Each was aware that the conversation was a game, both of them keeping the talk on a superficial level that would give away no insights. Adelina did not for a moment, underestimate Bono's commitment to their relationship and she fully understood how brave the decision he had taken was.

When they reached their chosen hotel, the manager himself came to welcome them and accompanied them to their room. On a table, on ice was a bottle of champagne. There were also biscuits and a jar of caviar on a silver tray.

Having missed their first wedding anniversary Bono was determined to celebrate their second one in the most memorable way possible. They spent both days and nights sharing each other's company and showing the kind of affection that they hoped would cement their relationship for a long time to come.

On the morning of 21st November, after settling their bill and thanking the manager and staff for their services, Bono and Adelina were dressed and sitting on the edge of their bed. At 09:00 A.M., there was a knock on the door. Bono already knew who it was and said, 'come in.'

The door opened, CJ, Karina and a couple of police officers in plain clothes stood there. Bono stood up, extending his arms forward. The two officers approached him and as they were about to handcuff him, CJ intervened, 'don't bother with that.'

The six of them exited the hotel as if they were a family. Though Bono expected to see police cars, he was pleasantly surprised to see a black shiny seven-seater Lexus ready to take them to the airport. Before leaving, Bono waved goodbye to the hotel manager who had done his utmost to make their last days of freedom one to be remembered.

Having done the crime there was no question in his mind that at least he would have to do the time. After CJ brought them back to the UK, they stood trial at the Old Bailey for the accidental death of Reddy (alias Vinna). CJ all along thought that Reddy was accidentally killed.

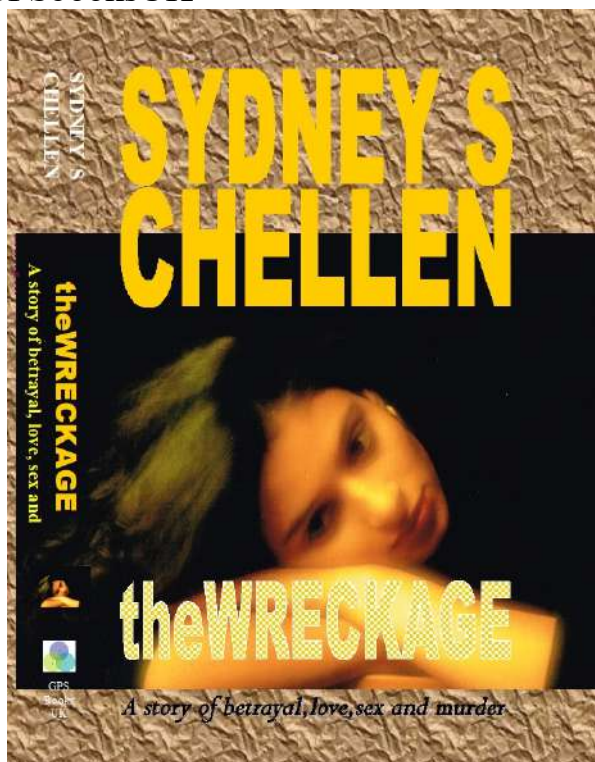
Even though Bono claimed sole responsibility for the unintentional death of Reddy, the Court still charged Adelina for aiding and abetting and was about to pass sentence when the judge learnt of Adelina's pregnancy. In light of the sudden discovery, he suspended her sentence and ordered her to pay one hundred thousand pounds. As she still had the money left from the five hundred thousand Bo had left with her, she was able to meet the demands of the court.

After she had the baby, Adelina went back to singing in a night club in London much to the disapproval of Bono who was still incarcerated, but she promised she would give it up on Bono's release. Her new boss was so pleased she was pulling in the punters, that he doubled the agreed wage.

Once Bono had served his sentence for manslaughter, he was once again able to reclaim his life, wife and home, plus a little baby boy who looked exactly like him. He couldn't help but laugh at the thought that this newcomer would remind him for the rest of his life of his double.

The Spencers sold their house and moved away to a beautiful place in the county of Kent. No one was ever convicted for the murder of Bo Greene. The police assumed he was shot in crossfire during the massacre at 56, Bellevue mansion. Although the body of Nasty was never found, he was also deemed to have been killed and no one cared by whom. Police recovered the painting of Whistler's mother and returned it to Musée d'Orsay in Paris. Several other rare and priceless stolen paintings were also recouped and given back to other museums in Europe. Prior to selling the house, with a simple phone call, Bono had fired his carpenter Johnny for shifting the door leading to the bedroom. Had that alteration not been made his story might have had quite a different outcome!!! ✍

---The End ---



THE WRECKAGE

by

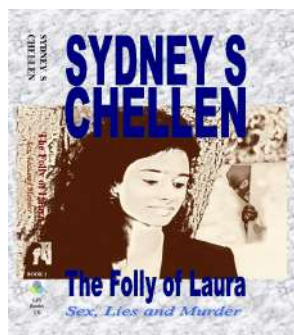
Sydney S Chellen

Enrico Swanson was a hard working man. Weary of the bleakness of his future, in his homeland where the rich got richer and the poor got poorer, he gathered his belongings and boarded a ship to a land of plenty. After he married Henrietta, his small wage working as a Civil Engineer was just about enough to pay his mortgage. He held two jobs working very long hours to provide for his small family. Enrico and Henrietta kept themselves to themselves. It was 1st September 2011 and they were excited because their daughter Petra, a 25-year-old university graduate from London, was returning home after four years of absence. They had cooked the best dinner they could afford to welcome her. What happened a week after her return launched a series of events that would trouble and haunt the Swanson family for years!

ISBN 978-1-78280-676-9

You can get your copy today at *Amazon.co.uk*
Also available in eBook format for your Kindle

A series of four books on SEX, LIES, and MURDER



“A great read that keeps you on the edge of your seat wanting to know more!!

Amazon customer

“This is a good piece of narrative. The plot is simple and there are few characters, which makes for easy reading and understanding. The writing style is brisk. Definitely, Sydney S Chellen is a good storyteller and his novel is very enjoyable. Hopefully the story could become the basis for a film script.”

Prega Valaydon, Mauritius.

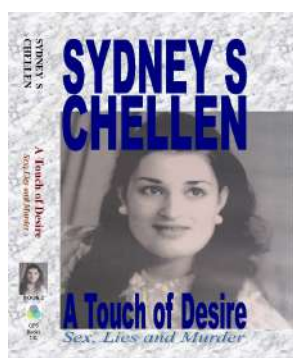
BOOK 1: The folly of Laura is a prequel to a touch of Desire

Laura is married to a successful surgeon and has just moved into a new house in Islington with her 7 year old son. One morning when she is home alone, a stranger comes in and rapes her. Fearing that her husband will blame her for allowing it to happen, she decides not to report the crime to the police.

Days later the stranger returns and bizarrely Laura starts an affair with him but soon after, decides to break off the illicit relationship.

Coincidentally someone kidnaps her son. After discovering the identity of the abductor, she decides to meet with him. *Can Laura rescue her son and save her marriage?*

ISBN 978-1-78280-451-2



“A great sequel to the first book – Sex, lies and murder – the folly of Laura.

If you were gripped by the first novel, you **MUST** read on...”

Amazon customer.

“After reading the first book, I was happy to learn there was more, and I wasn’t disappointed! As good if not better than the first and I hope to read more stories with the enterprising CJ Fairfield in the future!”

Amazon Customer.

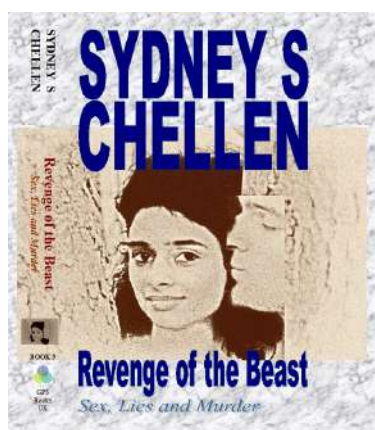
BOOK 2: A touch of Desire is a sequel to the novel the folly of Laura

Laura’s best friend, Desiré, is a retired model who is married to antique art dealer, Peter Emery. Bored with her dull and lonely life, she periodically frequents a brothel for distraction until one day a man comes to clean her swimming pool. She starts an affair with him and very quickly falls for him hook, line and sinker.

Who is this man? Is he the man who will bring Desiré the happiness she craves, or is he a devil in disguise with nothing but vengeance on his mind?

978-1-78280-452-9

You can get your copy today at Amazon.co.uk
Also available in eBook format for your Kindle



BOOK 3:

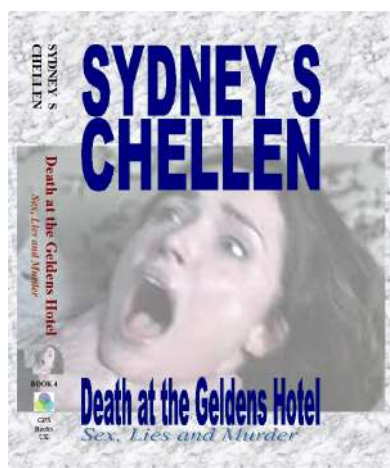
Revenge of the Beast is the third book in the series SEX, LIES & MURDER. It is a sequel to book one: *The Folly of Laura* and book two, *A touch of Desire*.

Antonio Bellucci is presumed dead when he was shot twice and ran into the sea in Herne Bay, Kent, England. Is he the road to happiness for Desiré or the worst nightmare for the Wilsons?

ISBN 978-1-78280-676-9

"A successful one! So interesting that I felt sorry when I reached the last page and I start looking forward for the 4th book. The thirst for the next book is well created by (a) the mystery around the ghost and the first session of exorcism which needs to be renewed; (b) the development in Medicines; (c) the body that disappeared." *Vicky Duval, Mauritian reader.*

Warm up those cold winter nights with these books. Be part of this exclusive group of readers!



BOOK 4:

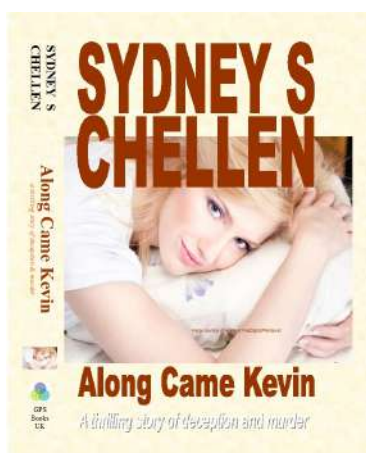
Death at the Geldens Hotel is the fourth book in the series SEX, LIES & MURDER. Michaela Wilson had it all—a successful career, a brand new house, and a loving husband. Whilst on honeymoon on the island of Mauri Tsui, she is tragically strangled in her hotel room. This senseless act of brutality robbed this beautiful English rose of a wonderful and vibrant life.

On the hunt is Detective Inspector CJ Fairfield. *Will he risk his life to find the killer or killers or will it just be another open and shut case?*

ISBN 978-1-78280-758-2

▲ "Great, great, great. Amazing ending." *Vicky Duval, Mauritian reader*

You can get your copy today at [Amazon.co.uk](https://www.amazon.co.uk)
Also available in eBook format for your Kindle



“A very interesting book! Sydney S Chellen is a great writer with fascinating imagination! First time I find myself clinging so much to reading a book. Interrupting the reading was done only when there was great need to do so. Interest is maintained all through out. If the word “end” was not written I would have kept turning the pages for further reading.” Vicky Duval, Mauritian reader.

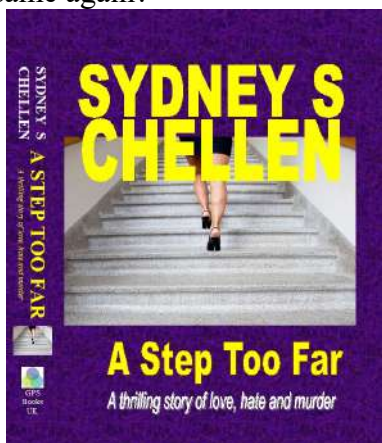
“I read the book. Very nice one. Lovely story, very creative and spicy. The last sentence touched my soul.”
Vanisha Soodoo,
Public Relations
Officer.

“I enjoyed reading the novel... quite a nice story.”
 Tanya Slegers Paul

ISBN 978-1-78280-951-7

Along Came Kevin is a crime thriller that a mainstream publisher in his native country did not want you to read **because ‘the plot may be a bit too dynamic for the Mauritian society and context.’**

It is a story of deception and murder concerning a brilliant car mechanic, Chad Donaldson, who is married to Amanda Price, a stunning, sexy and brilliant dance teacher from Essex who is fifteen years his junior. After seven years of what he thought was a happy marriage, his life turns upside down when he learns her hidden secret. How will he handle his discovery? Will Amanda's and Chad's life ever be the same again?



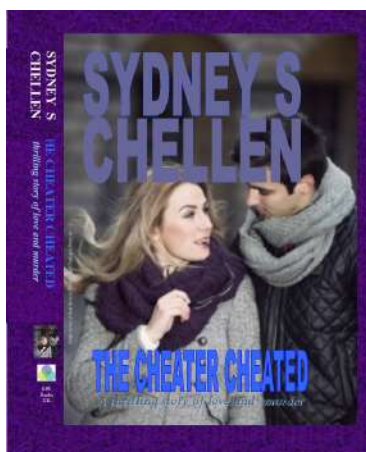
A Step Too Far is a thrilling story of love, hate and murder.

A Step Too Far is a great book, a perfect blend of love story (romance) and suspense. Somehow, it feels that at the beginning the author was driving slowly on the roundabout and preoccupied by which road to take to reach his destination. However, the language becomes more fluid as he leaves the roundabout.
 Mrs. Vicky Duval, reader from Mauritius.

Pretti Evans meets and falls in love with billionaire Richard Brent. Her ex-boyfriend can't accept that his four-year-long relationship with her has come to an end. After failing to regain her affection, he vows that if he cannot have her, no one else will. When Pretti ignores his threat and marries Richard, she sends him into a fit of fury. How far is he going to go to put asunder what God has joined? Moreover, is he going to succeed in achieving his goal?

ISBN 978-1-78808-454-3

You can get your copy today at [Amazon.co.uk](https://www.amazon.co.uk)
Also available in eBook format for your Kindle



The cheater cheated is a romantic thriller that will excite and bring tears to your eyes.

Mrs Diana.C., Reviewer from Ashford. Kent. UK.

A very interesting read. A perfect blend of love and crime
Vicky, Reader from Mauritius.

It is about a beauty therapist called Samantha who **whilst** on holiday in Venice with her parents, falls in love with **Ed**, an English gigolo. They elope to get married but the romance does not last long and after divorcing each other, they go their separate ways. Ed goes to fight in Iraq whilst Samantha meets and marries Clive, a plastic surgeon who is more than twice her age and she gives birth to a daughter. Five years later Ed comes back home to attend the funeral of his father. By chance, Samantha and Ed meet again. Though Samantha rebuffs Ed's advances, determined to win her back he pesters her. Days later, Ed is shot dead in his bed-sit. Who has done it? Detective Inspector CJ Fairfield investigates.

ISBN 788-1-78808-452-9

You can get your copy today at Amazon.co.uk
Also available in eBook format for your Kindle



Chellen's novel, *Bride In Waiting*, is a compelling read. It's a modernised version of 'Torn between two lovers'. Should we be allowed to have our cake and eat it?

Ms P.C., Reader from Ashford.
Kent. UK.

This latest novel, *Bride In Waiting*, by Sydney S Chellen is a tale of love, adultery and treachery and the passions and tensions they arouse in an Asian family. The ending may surprise some readers. Set on the island of Mauritius the story will adapt well in a typical Bollywood movie, with singing, dancing and sobbing! *PreVal, a reviewer.*

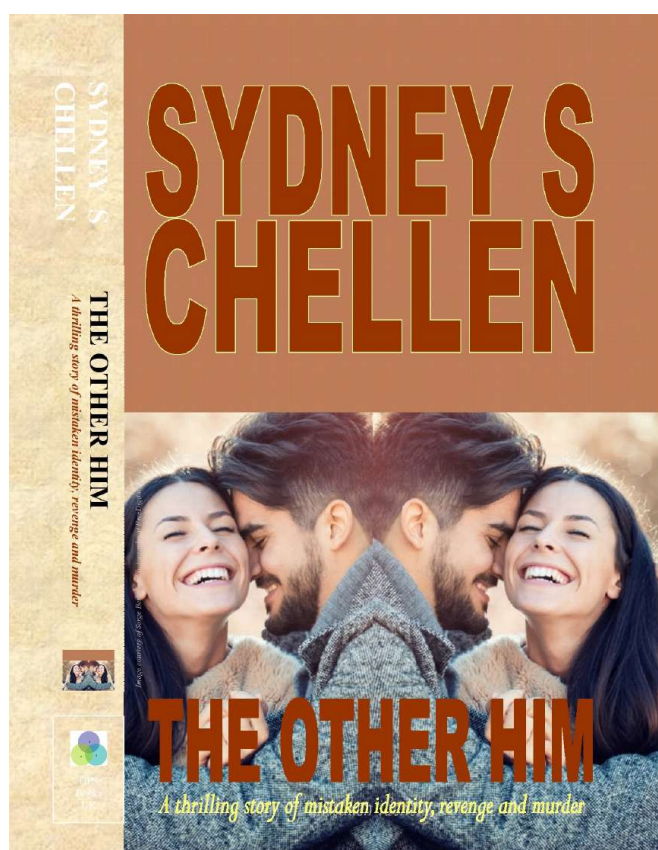
Bride in Waiting

This is a thrilling story of love and tribulations.

Dr Rama Kaminski has been married to Maya for ten years. They have a beautiful daughter, a detached house in the city and two cars. They seem perfectly happy – except Rama is secretly having an affair with his assistant, Dr Gud. The latter desperate to have Rama for herself, threatens to end the affair unless Rama divorces his wife and marries her instead. Rama has to choose between his family and his lover.

ISBN 978-1-78972-052-5

You can get your copy today at Amazon.co.uk
Also available in eBook format for your Kindle



A thrilling story of mistaken identity, revenge and murder.

A Mauritian reader

A most enjoyable novel with an unexpected twist at the end. The pace of the story will keep you panting.

Prega Valaydon,
Mauritian Reader.

The Other Him is a gripping psychological thriller and a great page-turner.

Mr. S. King, a reviewer.

A compelling read from start to finish. Full of twists...you won't want to put it down.

Mrs T.C, reader from Kent. UK.

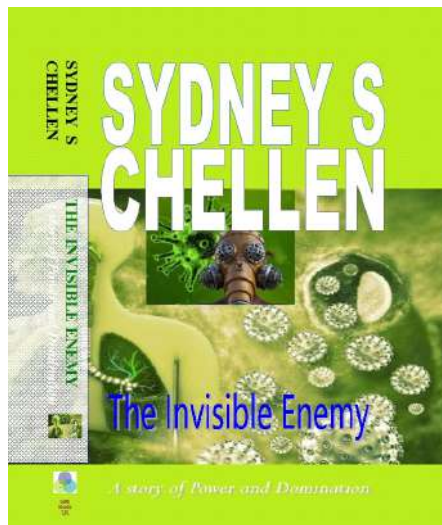
"What would you do if your identity was stolen by someone who looked just like you? A rollercoaster ride of deceit that will keep you on the edge of your seat until the end."

Macdadd. A reader from Kent.

Life is about to change for Bono Spencer, an art dealer who is married to a beautiful Russian nightclub singer. Returning home from his latest business venture, Bono finds himself embroiled in a case of mistaken identity. Once his life was simple and uncomplicated, now Bono has to fight to get back his home, his wife and his life. *Will he find the help he needs to fight back?*

ISBN 978-1-78972-053-2

You can get your copy today at [Amazon.co.uk](https://www.amazon.co.uk)
Also available in eBook format for your Kindle

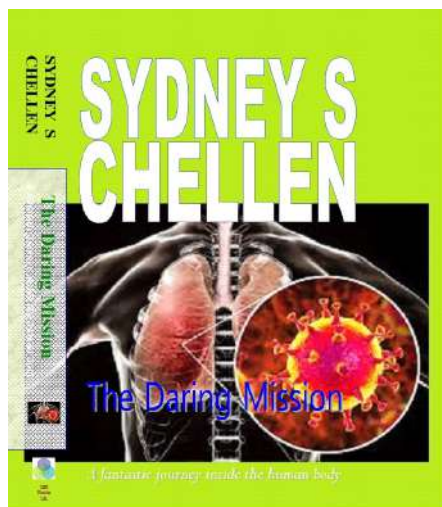


THE INVISIBLE ENEMY

by
Sydney S Chellen

As the COVID-19 pandemic rages throughout the world, a terrorist and a mad scientist set out to make the most of the situation by kidnapping some world leaders and holding them to ransom. The situation was becoming desperate until a British Secret Agent jumped into the game to eradicate the villains, but the latter were prepared to retaliate. How far would they go? Learn more by going through this new

novel by Sydney S. Chellen, a master of intrigue. REVIEW by Prega Valaydon, 14 May, 2021'



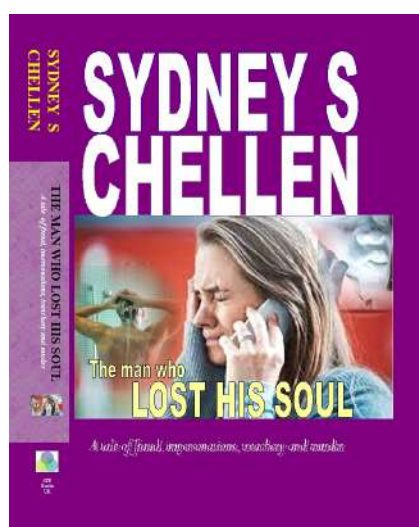
THE DARING MISSION

by
Sydney S Chellen

A team of doctors tries to save the life of a Prime Minister who has collapsed and has been rushed to hospital where he is diagnosed as having caught COVID19. In an attempt to rid his body of the deadly virus, a capsule and its crew is miniaturised and pushed down his windpipe. Is the crew taking too much of a risk as they run against the clock?...

REVIEW: The voyage inside the human body is written in plain English making it quite educational as well as entertaining. Mrs. Carr, a reader from South Wales.

You can get your copy today at [Amazon.co.uk](https://www.amazon.co.uk)
Also available in eBook format for your Kindle



The man who LOST HIS SOUL

by

Sydney S Chellen

2021-2022

Donna Rees, a beautiful thirty-five-year-old blonde-haired millionairess has for the last three years been living a peaceful life with her handsome toy-boy, **Jeff Larson**—ten years her junior. One evening she receives an international call claiming Jeff is a dead man walking. He has traded his soul in settlement of a gambling debt. The only way Donna can save Jeff is for her to settle his debt in ten equal instalments over a period of ten weeks. She is given a limited period to decide whether to pay the money. She naively signs a dodgy contract. Caught up in a financial fraud, she finds herself stranded in a foreign country. Soon she discovers a plot to murder her. Can she act quickly and save her life?

Reviews

Set in the UK and Nigeria, this new novel starts with a financial fraud, followed by impersonations, treachery and murder. In his usual style, the writer blends mystery and suspense. The pace is fast keeping the reader on the edge. *Prega Valaydon, 2021.*

Wonderful Romance. Full of suspense. Read at one go easily with scenes that are lively. The reader's turmoil accumulating is dissolved by the happy ending. *Regular Reader, VDC, Mtius, 2022.*

My friend recommended this novel. It is a 5-star for sure. Once I started reading I couldn't stop! Many twists and turns. *Amazon Reviewer.*

I've been looking for a romantic thriller novel to read and found my fix! Based on a millionairess who got caught on a financial scam and quickly found her life was at risk. I loved the narrative from start to finish, the plot, everything! - *Goodreads Reviewer.*

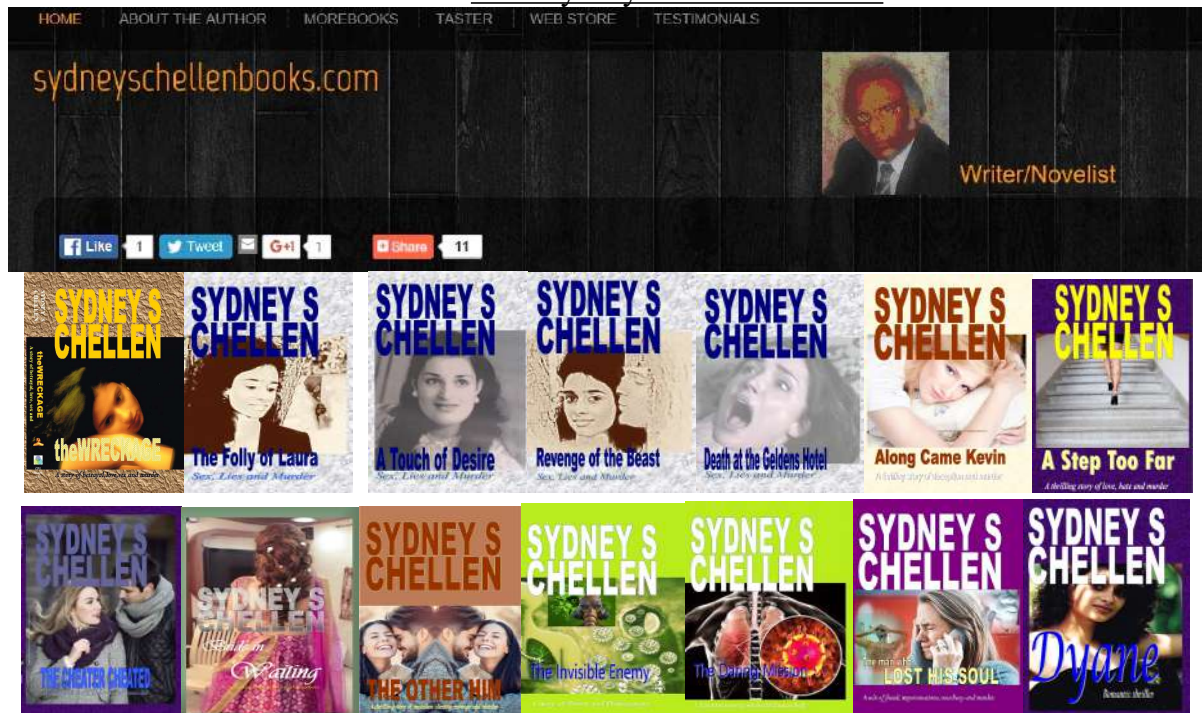
Once I started to read I found it very hard to stop. Very easy to get lost in it's various twists and turns with every turn of a page speculation and curiosity grew. Donna's naivety and stupidity led her into dangerous territories. One that every woman who doesn't want to get scammed should make a point of reading. *Reader from London.*

You can get your copy today at [Amazon.co.uk](https://www.amazon.co.uk)
Also available in eBook format for your Kindle

SYDNEY S CHELLEN

Online

Visit his website and read sample chapters of his books free, send and receive personal messages, and leave comments at www.sydney schellenbooks.com



WHO IS HE?



Why not find out more about Sydney's double lives, in Mauritius and Kent, his family and beloved cats and how he spends his time when he is not writing stories. Also, learn more about new releases and pre-publication sample chapters.

Other books

by Sydney S Chellen

The essential guide to the internet for health professionals. Routledge ISBN 0-415-22747-X

The essential guide to the internet for health professionals - Student edition.
Routledge ISBN 0-415-30557-8 (pb); ISBN 0-415-30556-X (hb).

The patient with a Mental Disorder. Cassell. ISBN 0-06-318295-5

Information Technology for the Caring Professions. Harper
and Row. ISBN 0-304-33162-7 (hb); 0-304-33164-3 (pb)

Word for Windows. Cassell. ISBN 0-304-33242-9

Excel for Windows. Cassell. ISBN 0-304-33241-0

A passage to Europe. GPSbooksUK.

Memories of Yesteryears. GPSbooksUK.

Untold Story - An Autobiography. GPSbooksUK.

An Untold Story Retold- The Autobiography. GPSbooksUK.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Sydney S. Chellen (AKA Sada, Seringapatam) was born in Mauritius, the third son of late Armon and Veerama (AKA Anne-Marie). He began work as a correspondent typist but eventually moved to Swansea, South of Wales, where after three years he qualified as a Registered Mental Nurse. He met and married Miss Georgina Scicluna, a Maltese nurse. At the age of twenty-five, he qualified as a State Registered Nurse and was awarded the John Ford-King prize for ‘best bedside manner’. In 1997, he became a Senior Lecturer at Canterbury Christ Church University and started to write educational books. His book: *The Essential Guide to the Internet for Health Professionals* became a best seller in UK and the USA. The second edition of the book is available in paperback, hardback and e-book format. In 1966, he co-wrote a fictional novel, *Wreckage* but forty-seven years later, he re-wrote it and re-titled it *theWreckage*—based partly on a true-life story. Thirteen more novels ensued—four of which form part of a series called *Sex, Lies, and Murder*.

Sydney S. Chellen has three children and two grand children. He and his wife who now live in the county of Kent, UK and they have two Birman pedigrees namely Lord DeMilo and Lady Tara which they adore.



GP'SbooksUK

A thrilling story of
mistaken identity, revenge and murder

The Other **HIM**

SYDNEY S CHELLEN

Life is about to change for Bono Spencer, an art dealer who is married to a beautiful Russian nightclub singer. Returning home from his latest business venture, Bono finds himself embroiled in a case of mistaken identity. Once his life was simple and uncomplicated, now Bono has to fight to get back his home, his wife and his life. *Will he find the help he needs to fight back?*



£9.99



2020, Sydney S Chellen